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The Justification of the Sinner Before God

*THE JUSTIFICATION
OF THE
SINNER BEFORE GOD*

On the basis of Holy Scripture
presented by

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Preface

God's merciful declaration of the forgiveness of sins by grace alone, for Christ's sake alone, through faith alone, as taught in the Scriptures alone, is the heart, core, and center of the Christian faith. It is for this reason that Lutheran Christians refer to the doctrine of justification as the article on which the church stands or falls (*articulus stantis et cadentis ecclesiae*).

Believers in Christ have been given the joyful privilege of proclaiming the Good News that God has forever put aside His anger toward His prodigal sons and daughters, not because of anything they have done but solely by virtue of Christ's death and resurrection. At the same time, Christ and His apostles call the church to solemn vigilance lest this precious Gospel ever be in any way conditioned, abridged, or distorted.

It is for both of these reasons that the inclusion of Edward Preuss' *Justification of the Sinner Before God* in Concordia Publishing House's Heritage Series is most welcome. In this work Preuss presents a Biblical explication of the doctrine of justification in the wide context of its antecedent and consequent articles. Calling upon the insights of such giants as Luther, Chemnitz, and Gerhard, he emphasizes the divine monergism effecting our salvation and the certain comfort thereby given to terrified consciences.

Heralded by C. F. W. Walther as the finest work on justification to appear in the 19th century, *Justification of the Sinner Before God* stands as a monument of evangelical scholarship whose contemporary value is undiminished by its author's later failings.

Samuel H. Nafzger

The Work of Christ.

Translated from Dr. Ed. Preuss's *Die Rechtfertigung des Suenders vor Gott*.
Part I, of which the first chapter is offered here, is superscribed
"On Redemption."

THE REV. JUL. A. FRIEDRICH, Iowa City, Iowa.

The bars of our prison are broken, its gates are shattered. What we could not do another one has done: Jesus Christ, true man and true God. The offense of one man brought condemnation; the righteousness of one Man brings rescue. Rom. 5, 18. True, not the righteousness of a *mere* man, for a *mere* man would have died for his own sins and could not have reconciled the Lord of the earth, just as little as a pot its potter. What gave that insuperable power to the righteousness of this Jesus was the fact that He is the true God and eternal Life. 1 John 5, 20.

This Son of David, who at the same time is the Son of God, Jer. 23, 5, 6, bore our sin. Isaiah prophesies this three times: "The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all," Is. 53, 6; "He shall bear their iniquities," Is. 53, 11; "He bare the sins of many," Is. 53, 11. John the Baptist testifies to this when he says: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." John 1, 29. If I am groaning under a heavy load and another man comes and takes it on his shoulders, then he takes my place. We were groaning under the load of our sins; then Christ came and took them on His shoulders. Therefore we justly say that He took our place. How earnestly this substitution was meant is shown 1 Pet. 2, 24: He "His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree," that is, on the cross. And there is where they belonged. It is one thing to wear another man's uniform in times of peace and quite another thing to wear it in a battle. He who wears it in a battle is willing and ready to do service in another man's place. But more: Scripture not only teaches that Christ bore our sins, but it directly calls Him, the true God, "sin." 2 Cor. 5, 21. If God made Him to be sin, then He was *sin* indeed. How are we to understand this? *God is sin*? Yes, just as truly was God sin as the Christians at Ephesus were light. St. Paul writes: "For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord," Eph. 5, 8, that is to say, God's light has so enveloped you that nothing else is visible.

In like manner was Jesus Christ so covered with the filth of the sin of all men as with a garment that nothing else was visible. True, *in* Christ there was no sin at all, 1 John 3, 5, but *on* Him were *all* the sins of the world. Therefore we teach with Luther: Christ became the greatest of all sinners, for He took the place of all sinners and thus became guilty of all the sins of the whole world although He was holy and innocent.

If that is the case, then it follows that the wrath of God rested upon Him. But who believes that God is so angry, and who fears His wrath? The wicked scoff at it and look upon it as a scarecrow placed in a garden to keep the birds away. But they will know better when He, at His appointed time, will come and reduce things to powder and ashes. For God is angry indeed. Let him who does not perceive the blasts of His anger in history learn to know it from His truthful Word. The Holy Spirit says through the prophet Isaiah: "The name of the Lord cometh from far, burning with His anger. . . . His lips are full of indignation and His tongue as a devouring fire." Is. 30, 27. God pours out His wrath like water. Hos. 5, 10. He executes vengeance in anger and fury upon all who refuse to obey. Micah 5, 15. It is argued that the God of the Old Testament is a God of wrath and the God of the New Testament a God of love. That is not true. Also the New Testament bristles with passages which declare the wrath of God. According to Rom. 1, 18 "the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men." According to Eph. 5, 6 "the wrath of God cometh upon the children of disobedience." And Rev. 19, 15 we read that Jesus Christ Himself "treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God." This wrath is nothing else than the revelation of the divine majesty against sin, the repelling power of His holiness. The wrath of God is not made void by the love which is essentially His essence, but is rather established and confirmed by it in its entirety and earnestness. All wrath, then, rested on Him who bore all sin. And therefore the Scriptures call Him "cursed." Gal. 3, 13. Not only that, but they declare that He was "made a curse for us." Gal. 3, 13. Curse is judgment of wrath. He is cursed whom the fierce anger of God crushes down into the depth of hell. "Depart from Me, ye cursed," Christ will say to the wicked on Judgment Day, "into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Matt. 25, 41. St. Peter calls those Christians who, after having been washed, again wallow in the mire "cursed children." 2 Pet. 2, 14, 22. The first curse came upon the head of the serpent, which betrayed Eve. Gen. 3, 14.

Yet all these are but "cursed"; Christ, however, clothed Himself with a curse as with a garment, so that nothing else could be seen. Not for His sake, — for compared with Him even the heavens are unclean, — but for our sake, in our stead. He was "made sin for us." Rom. 3, 13. For we all are cursed because we did "not continue in all things which are written in the Book of the Law to do them." Gal. 3, 10. And as Jesus took the load of sin on His shoulders in order to take it from our shoulders, even so He drew the lightning of divine wrath upon His head that our little hut might be saved from destruction. The intensity of the struggle involved in this substitution is shown by His suffering on the cross, especially by His plaintive cry, "*Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani!*" Matt. 27, 46. This cry was not groundless, for in the mouth of this Man there was no lie, no error. God had indeed forsaken Him; Jesus does not complain of this, but only asks, "Why?" True, God can forsake no one as we forsake one another. He can, however, withdraw His gracious presence; and that is hell. Luther says: In the Garden, Christ overcame death; but hell still had to be conquered. The struggle in the Garden with death cannot be compared with the one on the cross; for the latter meant a struggle of God with God. In the Garden He still had a gracious God, but on the cross God had turned against Him, had forsaken Him. Thus He drank the cup of divine wrath to the dregs and tasted "the second death." Rev. 21, 8. But why? O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, because Thou didst bear the sin of the world; that is why!

It is the wrath of God which in the name of His holy majesty pronounces the sentence of punishment, and it is the wrath of God which executes this sentence. Therefore Christ also bore our chastisement: our griefs and our sorrows. Is. 53, 4. "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him." Is. 53, 5. "For the transgression of My people was He stricken." Is. 53, 8. The climax of all sufferings is death. This, too, Christ suffered when He returned His spirit into the hands of His Father. Luke 23, 46. He suffered death, not as the common lot of mankind, but as the wages of sin. St. Paul says that "God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." Rom. 8, 3. This condemnation is death. As Christ bore our sin and the wrath of God in our stead, even so did He suffer death in our place. For sin worketh wrath, and wrath worketh death. After Caiaphas had heard the charges of the Pharisees against Jesus, he judged: "It is expedient for us that one should die for the people

and that the whole people perish not. And this spake he not of himself, but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die *for* that nation." John 11, 50. 51. True, "for" in this text means "*for the benefit* of the people," but for the benefit of the people through becoming their Substitute. For if I die in order that my brother need not die, *who otherwise would have had to die*, then I die in his stead. In the light of this testimony we now understand 1 Pet. 3, 18: "Christ hath once suffered for sin, the Just for the unjust," and Rom. 5, 6. 7: "Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet, peradventure, for a good man some would even dare to die." Thus He satisfied divine justice for us; for He tasted the first and the second death and drank the cup of the wrath of God to the dregs. Our redemption could not be purchased with a smaller price than that. The fact that the Son of God in Gethsemane thrice asked His Father in vain to let the cup of death pass from him proves that this was not possible, otherwise it would have been done. Christ had to suffer these things. Luke 24, 26; Acts 17, 3.

But Christ satisfied the holy will of God not only by His *passive*, but also by His *active* obedience; not only by suffering, but also by doing. Made of a woman, He was made under the Law, Gal. 4, 4, and fulfilled it perfectly, Matt. 5, 17, from His being subject to His parents, Luke 2, 51, to the washing of His disciples' feet, John 13, 4. 5. All His doing, suffering, and dying was done in obedience to God the Father and was to be a vicarious fulfilling of the Law. And this obedience flowed from love.

Verily, "Christ hath loved us and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor." Eph. 5, 2. For the sake of His love toward us He, according to the will of God, gave His blood for us: His flesh for our flesh, His soul for ours. Especially the Epistle to the Hebrews places the sin-offering of Christ under this viewpoint of self-sacrifice, an act of perfect obedience, by saying: "Christ, through the eternal Spirit, offered Himself without spot to God." Heb. 7, 27; 9, 14. No man was able to take His life from Him, but He laid it down of Himself. John 10, 18. Everything He did, from His incarnation until His death, was done in obedience to God the Father. Phil. 2, 8.

And at last, when Christ had done and suffered sufficiently, "He said, It is finished; and He bowed His head and gave up the ghost." John 19, 30. But "He was taken from prison and from judgment." Is. 53, 8. As God declared Him to be guilty of the sins of the world when, on the cross, He numbered Him with the

transgressors, Is. 53, 12; Luke 22, 37; 23, 32. 33, so He publicly freed Him, justified Him from all sin, when He raised Him up from the dead. That is what St. Paul means when he says that Christ "was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit." 1 Tim. 3, 16.

This is the work of Christ. And what are its blessings?

The Blessing of the Work of Christ.

(Translated from Dr. Ed. Preuss's *Die Lehre von der Rechtfertigung*,
Part I, chap. 2.)

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When the Scriptures say that Christ redeemed us, it means the freeing from sin and all its consequences, but chiefly the freeing from *guilt*. Heb. 9, 14; Eph. 1, 7; Col. 1, 14; Rom. 3, 24. This redemption is described as a *purchase*. Rev. 5, 9 the four and twenty elders sing: "Thou hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation." The purchase-money is "not corruptible silver or gold, but the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot," 1 Pet. 1, 18, 19; in fact, His entire obedience, 1 Tim. 2, 6. This ransom was paid to God, not to the devil. Eph. 5, 2; Heb. 9, 14.

At the same time Christ appeased the wrath of God. St. Paul says that God set Him forth to be a propitiation in His blood. Rom. 3, 25. "He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." 1 John 2, 2. The Greek verb which is the root of "propitiation" and "reconciliation" means "to appease wrath," "to dispose to grace or favor." The heathen used it of their gods; the Seventy [Septuagint], of God. Ps. 78, 38. It is peculiar that the Holy Scriptures in this connection do not make God the object of the verb (*ἱλάσκειν*), but rather sin, respecting which the wrath of God is appeased. Thus it is said of Christ, Heb. 2, 17, that He became a faithful High Priest before God "to make reconciliation for the sins of the people"; according to the original Greek, "to propitiate" (*i. e.*, to expiate) "the sins of the people." Col. 1, 20 says the same, although in other words: "He made peace through the blood of His cross, by Himself." In the first place, He made peace on the one hand, by making satisfaction to the wrath of the Father. In this manner the love of the Son had to force its way by means of His blood through the anger of the divine majesty. But we are saved from wrath. Rom. 5, 8, 9.

Out of the wrath of God flow God's punishments, as out of a fountain. Now, if the Lord stopped up the fountainhead, then the stream will not drown us. For He "redeemed us from the

curse of the Law, being made a curse for us." Gal. 3, 13. Thus He fulfilled what He had promised through the prophet Hosea: "I will redeem them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death. O death, I will be thy plague; O grave, I will be thy destruction." Hosea 13, 14. For the redeemed of God do not see death in all eternity. John 8, 51.

So, then, we are reconciled, 2 Cor. 5, 18; however, not only we, but also Hindus, and Hottentots and Kafirs, yes, the world. 2 Cor. 5, 19. "Reconciled," says our translation; the Greek original says: "placed in the right relation to God." Because before the Fall we, together with the whole creation, were in the right relation to God, therefore Scripture teaches that Christ, through His death, restored all things to the former right relation to God.

We, then, are redeemed from the guilt of sin; the wrath of God is appeased; all creation is again under the bright rays of Mercy, as in the beginning; yea, in Christ we were justified before we were even born. For do not the Scriptures say: "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them"? 2 Cor. 5, 19. This is not the justification which we receive by faith, but the one which took place before all faith. — And Rom. 5, 18: "As by the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of One the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." That is the great absolution which took place in the resurrection of Christ. For as the Father, for our sake, condemned His dear Son as the greatest of all sinners by causing Him to suffer the punishment of the transgressors, even so did He publicly absolve Him from the sins of the world when He raised Him up from the dead. And us in Him. Therefore Scripture says that Christ "was raised again *for our justification*." Rom. 4, 25. And 1 Cor. 15, 17 declares that, if Christ be not raised up, then we are yet in our sins, we are not yet absolved. That is why the apostle wishes to be found in Christ and to know Him and the power of His resurrection, this victorious power, which takes away all sins as the sun dispels the fog. Phil. 3, 9, 10. That is why St. Peter says that our regeneration is effected through the resurrection of Christ, 1 Pet. 1, 3, that Baptism itself derives its saving power from it. 1 Pet. 3, 21. And lastly, that is why St. Paul declares: "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." Rom. 10, 9.

This is the work of Christ and its blessing. We have such an

High Priest, "who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens," Heb. 7, 26; "who by His own blood entered in once into the Holy Place, having obtained eternal redemption for us," Heb. 9, 12. "For by one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." Heb. 10, 14.

The Imputation.

Translated from Dr. Ed. Preuss's *Die Lehre von der Rechtfertigung*,
Part I, chap. 2.

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"God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and hath committed unto us the *Word of Reconciliation*," 2 Cor. 5, 19. If the king issues an amnesty and does not send his messengers, men or letters, to publish it, it will profit no one. Therefore God has sent His apostles, and the words of St. Paul, spoken at Antioch, "That through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins," Acts 13, 38, have for nineteen hundred years continued to ring throughout the nations. The gates of the prison are shattered; God's messengers are standing on the threshold and cry, "Go forth!" Is. 49, 9; 61, 6; Luke 4, 18—21. Is it God's fault if some remain in it because they love their dungeon? Freedom was granted to all the captive Jews in Babylon, but those who desired to remain there did not come into possession of it. He, however, who hears God's message and goes forth is free; him God, for the sake of the perfect satisfaction rendered by Christ, regards as righteous.

This justification does not coincide with the atonement on the cross, but is rather its fruit. God justifies you by not only announcing grace to you, but by truly and actually receiving you into the relation of grace and sonship. The verb *to justify* occurs thirty-eight times in the New Testament,¹⁾ and in all these thirty-eight passages it signifies a forensic act. It means *to regard as righteous, to declare righteous*, not *to infuse righteousness*. This may be seen most clearly Luke 10, 29. The lawyer, "willing to justify himself, said to Jesus, And who is my neighbor?" That certainly cannot be rendered: "He wanted to infuse righteousness into himself," but: "He wanted to be his own judge and acquit himself." Luke 16, 15 Jesus chides the Pharisees: "Ye are they

1) Matt. 11, 19; 12, 37; Luke 7, 29. 35; 10, 29; 16, 15; 18, 14; Acts 13, 39 (twice); Rom. 2, 13; 3, 4. 20. 24. 26. 28. 30; 4, 2. 5; 5, 1. 9; 6, 7; 8, 30. 33; 1 Cor. 4, 4; 6, 11; Gal. 2, 16 (three times); 2, 17; 3, 8. 11. 24; 5, 4; 1 Tim. 3, 16; Titus 3, 7; Jas. 2, 21. 24. 25.

which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts." Would He have chided them if they had endeavored to bring a gift of righteousness into their hearts? I rather think they wanted *to be regarded as righteous* without changing their heart. Luke 7, 29 it is said of the publicans that they even "justified God, being baptized." Does that really mean: they infused righteousness into God? A heathen would be ashamed to talk such nonsense. No; Luther translated correctly: "*Sie gaben Gott recht*"; that is, they confessed by their act that God is "just and the Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." Rom. 3, 26. When, therefore, Scripture says: God justifies the sinner, then this means: He regards him righteous, He acquits him; not: He infuses something into him. Else how could God's justifying and condemning be placed in direct antithesis to each other? But this is done, Rom. 8, 33, 34: "It is God that justifieth. Who will condemn?" And Rom. 5, 16: "The judgment was by one to condemnation; but the free gift is of many offenses unto justification"; and Matt. 12, 37: "By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." This is the language employed already by the Seventy who translated the Old Testament. Is. 50, 8; Deut. 25, 1. But lest any one doubt that God's justifying is indeed a judicial sentence, which declares us to be free, we call attention to equivalent expressions in which the Holy Ghost says the same thing in other passages: John 3, 18: "not to be condemned," and John 5, 24: "not to come into condemnation."

Our Judge, then, acquits us, and that by grace. Rom. 3, 24. But in Scripture "grace" means "God's favor with which He wishes us well and is gracious to us." (Luther.) And that is why the sentence is rendered "*freely*." Rom. 3, 24. Happy are we beggars! For naught we were sold; we shall be redeemed without money. Is. 52, 3; 55, 1; Rev. 22, 17. Yes, altogether without our merit. Not as Joseph, who found grace in the sight of Potiphar because he was a prosperous man. Gen. 39, 2—4. And even though we had the virtues of Joseph, God's eyes are not the eyes of Potiphar, but flames of fire, before which no one can stand. Within us there is no merit, no worth, whereon the sentence of God is based; on the contrary, we are conceived in sin, and on account of thousands of sinful deeds we are worthy of death. In us, O Lord, Thou findest no source of blessing, but a fountain of condemnation. Nevertheless Thou justifiest us freely and by grace! 2) True, not

2) "*Nihil invenis, unde salves; multum autem invenis, unde damnes; et tamen ex misericordia propter Christum nos recipis.*" — St. Augustine.

without cost on the part of God; for we are justified freely by grace only on the basis of the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Rom. 3, 24. This, then, is the real procedure in God's judgment: Just as He, on the one hand, imputed our sin to His beloved Son, who knew no sin, even so He, on the other hand, imputed the righteousness of Christ to us, who knew no righteousness. 2 Cor. 5, 21. That God imputes a foreign righteousness is said Rom. 4, 6 and Phil. 3, 9; but that this righteousness is Christ, we read 1 Cor. 1, 30 and twice in Jeremiah. Jer. 23, 5. 6. Therefore the *Formula of Concord* correctly says: "On account of the complete obedience which He [Christ] rendered His heavenly Father for us, by doing and suffering, in living and dying, God forgives our sins, regards us as godly and righteous." (*Triglotta*, 919.f.)

"Regards us as righteous," not "makes us righteous." The very first passage in the Bible where this word occurs which has caused so much controversy is victoriously clear: "God counted it to Abraham for righteousness." Gen. 15, 6. [Jas. 2, 23: "It was *imputed* unto him for righteousness."] True, there is also an imputation "of debt," that of the hire to the laborer. Rom. 4, 4. But according to the expressed testimony of the Holy Ghost the imputation of which we are here speaking does not take place as "of debt." The former has its ground in man, to whom something is imputed; the latter in Him who imputes, in God. Rom. 4, 5. Just as Christ was numbered with the transgressors, not because He had done evil, but for our sakes, because it so pleased God. Is. 53, 12; Mark 15, 28. And this remains the rock on which the pure doctrine of the imputed righteousness rests: according to 2 Cor. 5, 21 God makes us righteous in the same way as He makes Christ a sinner, and in no other. The papists persist in objecting that an imputed righteousness, which does not dwell in the hearts, is a dream. Very well, if it is a dream indeed, then the vicarious satisfaction of Christ together with His suffering is a dream too. The bitter reality of the one guarantees the truth of the other. For just as little as our own unrighteousness dwelt in Christ as wickedness and was nevertheless truly imputed to Him, so much so that His God forsook Him, just so little does the righteousness which makes us righteous before God dwell in us, and is nevertheless truly imputed to us, so much so that we are of good cheer even in the face of death. Behold, the Holy One in Israel cries on the cross, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" and the sinner Polycarp rejoices in the agony of death, "Lord God, I praise Thee that Thou hast in this day and in this hour counted me worthy

to partake, with all Thy martyrs, of the cup of Thy Christ for the resurrection of soul and body in the incorruptibility of the Holy Ghost!" Is it not this way: The Man on the cross bore, by imputation, foreign sin, and the man on the pyre, by imputation, foreign righteousness? He wore it as a garment. This picture is used by Scripture to hold up before our eyes the imputed righteousness of Christ. Isaiah sings: "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God, for He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness." Is. 61, 10. And Christ advises the bishop of Laodicea to buy of Him white raiment that the shame of his nakedness do not appear. Rev. 3, 18. Whosoever is not clothed in the wedding-garment which the King requires, because He furnishes it Himself, will be cast out of the wedding-hall. Matt. 22, 11—13. The same picture is employed when Scripture speaks of "putting on Christ," Gal. 3, 27; often also in such passages where it is said that we are or should be *in Christ*. In Christ we are blessed, Eph. 1, 3; in Christ we have grace, Eph. 1, 6; in Christ we have redemption, Eph. 1, 7, and victory, 2 Cor. 2, 14. That is to say, blessing, grace, redemption, victory — all these we shall have only when Christ covers us with His merits as with a garment. Thereby both things happen at once: the garment flows about your shoulders, and you are no longer naked. If God bestows the righteousness of Christ on a man, He grants him the forgiveness of sins. That is the reason why Scripture sometimes calls the imputation of Christ's merits "justification," at other times "forgiveness." Acts 13, 38. 39. In fact, those passages in which justification is treated most extensively define the imputation of righteousness simply as the forgiveness of sins. Rom. 4, 6. 7 it is said: "Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." That is the doctrine of the Fathers also. And what is more natural? Even our sin has its positive and its negative side [*"ihr Ja und ihr Nein," i. e., "its yea and its nay"*]: positive, wickedness; negative, unrighteousness. So grace comes and blots out the negative by imputing the righteousness of Christ and the positive by granting forgiveness.³⁾

3) Even original sin has its negative and its positive side. The negative is the *carētia justitiæ*; the positive, the *prava concupiscentia*. The negative is eliminated through the imputation of the righteousness of Christ; the positive, through forgiveness.

However this justification, or imputation, or forgiveness — choose whichever name you will — is an act of God which takes place in time. And, mark you, for every man individually. The justification of Paul did not come to pass at the same time as that of Cornelius; but as often as a heathen forsakes his idols, or a Jew his Talmud, so often, and much more often does God justify. Come he must, of course. For he that does not come, that is, “believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him,” John 3, 36.

Of Faith.

Translated from Dr. E. Preuss's *Die Lehre von der Rechtfertigung*, Part III.

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The righteousness of Christ, then, has been procured; but, as the apostle says, it comes "unto all and upon all them that believe." Rom. 3, 22. He who keeps this in mind will be spared the vexations which the Wurttemberg superintendent Burk experienced. It seemed to him like a faulty circle: "I am to believe and thereby become righteous. But what am I to believe? This, that I am righteous. However, I cannot believe this before it is so. And yet it is not so, for I am first to become righteous." God be praised, the case is different. *This* we must believe, that Christ *has* redeemed us. And as God said to His covenant people through Isaiah: "I *have* redeemed thee, I *have* called thee by thy name; thou *art* Mine," Is. 43, 1, even so does He tell us through His apostle: "The handwriting that was against us is blotted out," Col. 2, 14; "He *purged* our sins," Heb. 1, 3; "We *are* reconciled," Rom. 5, 10. Eternal peace reigns; all strife is ended. Col. 1, 20. That saving faith apprehends *this* and nothing else St. Paul teaches in those texts in which he expressly and officially treats of justification. Rom. 4, 24, 25 he says that we are justified "if we believe on Him that raised up Jesus, our Lord, from the dead, who was delivered for our offenses and was raised again for our justification." And 1 Cor. 15, 1—4 he declares that one is saved by believing "that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures." And lastly, Gal. 2, 20, he describes his own faith as "the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." This is also the doctrine of the Augsburg Confession (Art. XII) and of the theologians.

"To believe" — ~~what~~ does that mean? Does it mean to take the death and resurrection of Christ for granted as one takes the battle of Pydna for granted? Most certainly not! Although it would be quite agreeable if Messrs. Strauss and Renan were ready to do even this. "To believe" means "to take"; "to believe in Christ's merit" means "to take Christ's merit" as the lungs take the air. Although the air surrounds you on all sides, yet it will

do you no good if your lungs do not inhale it. Just so the all-sufficient merit of Christ will not help you if you do not apprehend it. St. Paul writes, Col. 2, 6: "As ye *have* therefore *received* Christ Jesus, the Lord, so walk ye in Him." Yes, St. John uses the expressions, "to receive Christ" and "to believe" as equivalents. He says in the first chapter of his Gospel: "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believed on His name." John 1, 12. And Christ Himself says, John 17, 8: "I have given unto them the words which Thou gavest Me; and they *have received* them . . . and *have believed* that Thou didst send Me." *Vice versa*, Scripture describes unbelief as the act of not receiving Christ. "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not." John 1, 11. Therefore we say with Chemnitz: Saving faith is nothing else than the apprehension of Christ (*Est igitur apprehensio, acceptio seu applicatio promissionis gratiae formale fidei justificantis*); he who will not receive is not justified (*Qui non accipiunt, non justificantur*). And with Oeder: Faith is nothing less and nothing more than the instrument with which we appropriate a foreign righteousness. In truth, as long as we are on this earth, no one sits in the ship, but we are all lying in the water. Therefore we must constantly cling to the rim of the boat in which Christ is sitting. The prayer, "Suffer us not to sink in the bitter pains of death," and the other, "Suffer us not to fall from the comfort of true faith," are one and the same. By what other organ than by faith could we possibly become partakers of the merits of Christ? Mental remedies are received in no other way. A father believes his son to be dead. When you tell him, "He lives!" he hears the message, but lacks faith. What will it profit him? Or a guilty conscience has driven a child away from home. The mother publishes advertisements, "Return! You are forgiven!" But the child does not believe it. So wrath abideth upon him. John 3, 36. That is what Christ means when He says: "He that believeth not is condemned already." John 3, 18.

Redemption was indeed accomplished for all, but some remain in prison although bright daylight shines through the shattered gates. Rom. 8, 32; 2 Cor. 5, 14, 15; 1 Tim. 2, 6; Heb. 2, 9; 1 John 2, 2; 2 Pet. 2, 1. To such the words of Christ apply: "Ye would not!" Matt. 23, 37. This not willing to believe is the only sin which damns under the Gospel dispensation. Therefore Christ does not say: "He that sinneth," but: "He that believeth not shall be damned." Mark. 16, 16. And the Holy Ghost was sent to

"reprove the world of sin because they believe not" on the Lord Jesus, John 16, 7, 8; of no other sin, because all sins remain where this one remains, and all are remitted when this one departs. Luther says: "Nothing damns but this, that one does not accept this Savior and refuses to have Him who takes sin away. For if He were there, there would be no more sin there. Therefore the world is no longer reprov'd of . . . other sins, because Christ blotted them out, but in the New Testament only this remains sin, that one will not know and receive Him." (St. Louis Ed., XI, 868.) So much do the eyes of God consider faith.

So we believe, and God justifies. Which of the two comes first? Our faith, it seems. At least St. Paul says: "Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." Rom. 4, 3. Ancient and modern errorists have concluded from this that God regards us righteous on account of the excellent qualities of our faith. Neither the one nor the other is correct; for the clear testimonies of Scripture which call *Christ* our Righteousness, Jer. 23, 6 and 1 Cor. 1, 30, are against it. And what sense would there be in Rom. 10, 4: "Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness to every one that believeth," if God regarded us righteous for the sake of any virtue? And Is. 45, 24, 25: "In the Lord have I righteousness and strength," and: "In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified and shall glory." And what would become of all the testimonies concerning the atonement effected through the death of God if our faith effected it? And does not the same apostle who taught about faith as mentioned above most anxiously separate his own righteousness from the righteousness which is of God? Phil. 3, 9. How, then, dare he be charged with having considered his faith meritorious to become righteous before God? The import of the imputation of faith will become clear if we compare Acts 15, 9 with 1 John 1, 7. Acts 15, 9 it is taught that faith cleanses us; 1 John 1, 7 this is attributed to the blood of Christ. Now either John contradicts Peter in this point, or else the blood of Christ is the remedy and faith the taking of the remedy. Thus the two texts are in consonance. In fact, the Scriptural term "faith" contains both — kernel and shell. Christ's merit is the kernel; our apprehension, the shell. The shell is indeed necessary to hold the fruit on the tree, but the nourishing power of the fruit comes from the kernel. And the Holy Spirit has especially this kernel in mind when He speaks of faith. Thus Gal. 3, 23: "Before faith came, we were kept under the Law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed." Christ

is here meant in so far as He is apprehended by faith. (Note: Our faith did not indeed make us free from the bondage of the Law, but Christ.) Likewise it is said Rom. 12, 6: "Let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith," of course, according to the content which is believed, not according to our taking. And Eph. 4, 5: "One Lord, one faith, one Baptism." That here, too, all emphasis is to be laid on the proclamation which is apprehended by faith is shown in v. 14: "That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive." Jude 20 we are even exhorted to build up ourselves on our *most holy faith*. Why do we not speak of our most holy love wherewith we help the poor, or of our most holy repentance? For the simple reason that the emotions of our soul do not merit such high praise; neither does our faith. But this is our most holy faith, "that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners." Also such texts as Acts 6, 7 belong here: "A great company of priests weré obedient to the faith." This certainly means nothing else than this: they were obedient to the Gospel. Now we understand why Paul uses two words: "To him that *believeth* . . . his *faith* is counted for righteousness." Rom. 4, 5. For the faith which is counted to him for righteousness is the merit of Christ. True, faith, in the New Testament, never means the Gospel in so far as it is *not* believed, but always both: the Gospel *together* with faith which apprehends it. Likewise does the word "hope" in Scripture always embrace both: our hoping *and* God's promise. Only in so far does hope not make ashamed, whilst hope of another kind makes a fool of many a one.

Whoever, therefore, teaches that God imputes our faith for righteousness errs. (*Falsa est interpretatio, quod fides pro actu credendi sumta nobis imputetur, quia imputationis hujus unicum objectum est justitia Christi.* — Hoepfner.) Our unbelief is indeed the fundamental unrighteousness of which the world is reproved; the righteousness, however, which God offers to the world is not its faith, but Christ's obedience. The Lord says: "And when He [the Comforter] is come, He will reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they believe not on Me; of righteousness" — probably that they shall believe? No, but — "because I go to the Father, and ye see Me no more," John 16, 7—10. So, then, our unbelief is our unrighteousness, but our righteousness is not our faith, but Christ's going to the Father, that is, His innocent suffering and death, yes, His entire obedience.

(*Transitus Christi ad Patrem est nostra justitia. Repetitio Corporis Doctrinae Christianae.* — Luther: "This word, 'That I go to the Father,' embraces the entire work of our redemption, . . . namely, the suffering, death, and resurrection of Christ." St. Louis Ed., XI, 897.) Luther says: "This going is the right eternal righteousness. Of this the world knows nothing; not a letter concerning it is found in all other books. Christ here does not say a word of what I must do or not do, but He speaks solely and only of His work that He does. That is to be our righteousness and nothing else." (St. Louis Ed., XIII, 592.) We are, therefore, not righteous for the sake of our faith, but for Christ's sake. 1 John 2, 12. But we are indeed righteous *through* faith. Rom. 3, 25, 30; Gal. 2, 16; 3, 4; Eph. 2, 8; 3, 12; Rom. 3, 28. That a diamond ring is worth a hundred dollars is caused by the stone, not by the setting, although one needs the setting in order to wear it on the finger.

But Abraham, — how is it with him? Christ's righteousness could certainly not be imputed to him, and yet he became righteous. For does not Scripture say of him: "And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body, now dead, when he was an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb. He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully persuaded that what He had promised He was able also to perform. And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness"? Rom. 4, 19—22. Here it is clearly written: God promised Abraham offspring; Abraham firmly relied in the fulfilment of this promise, and God imputed *this* to him for righteousness. Therefore — so we conclude with Bellarmine — faith is a heroic act for the sake of which God regards us righteous.

Not so fast! First that legion of texts would needs have to be plucked out of the Bible which safeguards the imputed righteousness of Christ, especially the chapter of the Epistle to the Romans immediately preceding this one. Meanwhile it might be permitted to explain the second sentence of a letter by means of the first, in our case, the fourth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans by means of chapter three. For here Paul describes the curative treatment by which God makes *all* whole, by saying: "All have sinned, . . . being justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." He, in His blood, is the Propitiation [*Suehnmittel* = means of propitiation], which is apprehended by faith. Rom. 3, 23—25. In this way God saved Abraham before all others.

He, too, believed, not in God in general, but in that God who justifies the sinner, Rom. 4, 5; and that "was counted unto him for righteousness," Rom. 4, 3. In the following verses the apostle explains how this is to be understood. Rom. 4, 4—9. But we must apply everything that is said in these six verses of justification also to the justification of Abraham, yes, especially to Abraham's justification. For it is the beginning (Rom. 4, 2. 3) and the end (v. 9) of the entire passage. So, then, it applies to Abraham, and to Abraham first of all, that righteousness without works was imputed to him. Rom. 4, 6. Pray, which righteousness? His own? Then grace were no more grace. So, then, a foreign one. But if a foreign one, which other one than Christ's, who, according to the expressed testimony of Scripture, died also "for the transgressions that were under the first testament." Heb. 9, 15. For this righteousness, as Paul has taught a few lines above, is "being witnessed by the Law and the prophets." Rom. 3, 21. 22. But in order to remove all doubt, it is further declared that this imputed righteousness consisted in nothing else than the forgiveness of sins. Rom. 4, 7. 8. Shall we perhaps invent a new way of salvation for Abraham? Shall we say that he believed, and that, as a reward for this, God forgave his sins? This way is also barred by v. 4 with its "Grace — not of debt." Rom. 4, 4. Then nothing remains for us but the confession: Abraham's faith was imputed to him for righteousness because it apprehended Christ. Thus Abraham was saved in the same manner as we are. For this reason, and for this reason only, did St. Paul exemplify the doctrine of justification, which he unfolds in the third chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, in Abraham. First doctrine, then example. Yes, here is more than an example; here is the original (*Urbild*). For we are not commanded to believe as, among others, Abraham believed, but we are to believe after his pattern. For the history of his justification "was not written for his sake alone, . . . but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on Him that raised up Jesus, our Lord, from the dead." Rom. 4, 23. 24. In this sense Abraham is the father of all them that believe, not only of the circumcision, but also of the uncircumcision, Rom. 4, 11. 12. 16, because they all became righteous before God through the same righteousness as he. If he were nothing more than a model of vigorous faith, then the Mohammedans would be his most excellent children.

But where is it written that Abraham believed Christ? Does not Scripture rather designate the promise of the Seed as the contents of his faith? True, but this Seed was Christ. This is

the testimony of the same apostle who sets Abraham's faith before us as an example. Gal. 3, 6. But if Abraham became righteous through faith in the Seed, and if this Seed was Christ, then he became righteous through faith in Christ. Pray do not tell us that we illumine the mind of Abraham with the torch of Paul; that the patriarch understood the seed to be a child and nothing more. Nothing more? May it tickle the contemporaries to crowd their father Abraham under their footstool — he was greater than they. "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see **My** day," says Christ, "and he saw it and was glad." John 8, 56. It makes no difference whether one takes the "day of Christ" to be the day of His incarnation or the day of His appearing in the Plain of Mamre — it is certain that Abraham saw Christ, either with the eyes of his body in the door of his tent or by faith, when God promised him Seed, or both. See Him he did; this Christ testifies expressly, and so also the Jews understand Him: "Thou art not yet fifty years old and hast seen Abraham?" John 8, 57. How in the name of common sense can there have been a personal acquaintance between you? Very easily, answers Christ; for "I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am." John 8, 58. Will you still say that we illumine the eyes of Abraham with the lamp of Paul? Methinks they do not need it. One should not picture the patriarchs to one's eyes as poor simpletons — with eyes turned to the ground, moved by earthly promises, without knowledge of Christ, and without hope of the life to come. Did they not have the Gospel of the "Seed of the woman" who was to bruise the head of the serpent? Gen. 3, 15. And they faithfully pondered it in their hearts and waited for their Savior, from Eve, Gen. 4, 1, to Simeon, Luke 2, 25—37. [*Note.* — Gen. 4, 1 can mean nothing else than, "I have the Man Jehovah."] "And [they] confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth," Heb. 11, 13, "and looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder is God," Heb. 11, 10. "Wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God." Heb. 11, 16. And would you know the difference between Abraham's faith and ours? We become righteous through faith in the Lord who has come; Abraham, through faith in the Lord who was to come. The object of our faith, therefore, is present as regards the virtue, but past as regards the time; what Abraham believed was also present as regards the virtue, but future as regards the time.

So the example of Abraham also confirms the thesis of the Formula of Concord: "For faith justifies, not for this cause or

reason, that it is so good a work and so fair a virtue, but because it lays hold of, and accepts, the merit of Christ in the promise of the Gospel." (*Triglotta*, p. 919.)

Now we shall also be able to answer the question which precedes, justification or faith. Faith certainly does not precede justification; else justification would take place for its sake instead of for Christ's sake. Neither, however, does justification precede faith; otherwise it would take place without faith. Rather, both are together, or coincident. As the electric spark goes through your body at the same moment that your hand touches the wire, so God regards you righteous at the same moment that you apprehend Christ. "He that believeth hath," we read John 3, 36; not: "He that believeth will receive." Neither: "He that believeth hath had." But: "He hath." And Acts 13, 39: "All that believe are justified." Not: "Will be justified," or: "Have been justified," but: "Are justified," in the same moment in which they believe. Just as the woman who had an issue of blood was healed the very moment she touched Christ's garment. Mark 5, 28, 29. For this reason the Holy Spirit so often says that we become righteous *through* [*by*] *faith*, Acts 26, 18; Rom. 3, 25. 28, 30; Gal. 2, 16; 3, 14; Eph. 2, 8; 3, 12, not for the sake of faith or in consequence of faith. Most strikingly, however, the matter is illustrated by a type to which the Lord Himself points us. When the fiery serpents in the desert tormented the children of Israel, Moses, by the command of God, made a serpent of brass and set it upon a pole; and if a serpent had bitten any man, he looked upon the serpent of brass, and *when he beheld, he lived*. Num. 21, 6—9. So we become righteous the moment the eye of our faith looks up to its brazen serpent, the Son of Man, who was lifted up. John 3, 14—16.

But in order to safeguard the pure doctrine against corruption, Scripture adds "without works" to the words "by faith." Eph. 2, 8, 9: "For by grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; *not of works*, lest any man should boast." And still stronger Rom. 11, 6: "If by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace." And Rom. 4, 2, 6: "If Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory, but not before God. . . . Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth *righteousness without works*." But if we are justified without works, then *all* works are rejected, be they small or great. For in the sight of God nothing counts but solely and only His beloved Son Jesus Christ;

He is altogether pure and holy before Him. Where He is, there God looks and is well pleased in Him. Luke 3, 22. Now, the Son is not apprehended by works, but only by faith, without all works. (Luther, St. L. Ed., XVIII, 670.) So, then, works have absolutely nothing to do with justification, neither as merit nor as means. And when the Jesuits pretend that faith justifies through works, then this fiction is dashed to pieces in Eph. 2 and Rom. 4, just as that other one: faith and works. It certainly is not the same whether a prince rules through the Jesuits or without them.

Besides these comprehensive and unmistakable expressions others are found in Scripture, such as Rom. 3, 28: "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the Law," and Gal. 2, 16: "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law." But the Law includes all that which God has commanded, especially the Ten Commandments, Rom. 3, 20; and its sense is not carnal, but spiritual, Rom. 7, 14. "Thou shalt love the Lord, thy God, with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind . . . and thy neighbor as thyself." Matt. 22, 37. 39. The works of this Law cannot possibly be anything else than works which conform to it: justice and love, and all the others. For Christ expressly numbers mercy and faith among the chief parts of the Law. "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!" He cries out Matt. 23, 23, "for ye pay tithes of mint and anise and cumin and have omitted the weightier matters of the Law, judgment, mercy, and faith. These ought ye to have done and not to leave the other undone." But such works, in fact, all works, Paul excludes from justification. But when it is said that the good works of the regenerate are not works of the Law, then this contradicts Jer. 31, 33. There God testifies that the saints of the New Covenant shall not lose the Law, but that it will be written in their hearts. So their works are truly works of the Law, a thousand times more works of the Law than those of the Pharisees. However, whether the Law be within or without, with justification it has not the least to do. This fact Scripture teaches expressly Rom. 3, 21: "The righteousness of God *without the Law* is manifested," and Gal. 3, 11: "No man is justified by the Law." Therefore cherish it in your heart as did Paul, Rom. 7, 22, humble yourself before it like Ahab, 1 Kings 21, 21. 27. 29, — it is not your righteousness before God.

But that God indeed disregards all works of the regenerate, even the best, when He acts judicially with us, is shown by the example of Abraham. For the apostle does not ask whereby he

became righteous in his first conversion, when he emigrated from Chaldea, but he asks wherein the righteousness of Abraham consisted at the time when he was already adorned with a wreath of good works. By faith he had gone out of his father's house, Gen. 11, 31; Heb. 11, 8; by faith he had sojourned in the land of promise, Heb. 11, 9; had built altars unto God, Gen. 12, 7; 13, 18; had publicly called upon His name, Gen. 12, 7; 13, 4; had kept peace with Lot, Gen. 13, 8, 9; had not sought his own, Gen. 14, 21—24. In the midst of this course of truly good works the apostle stops him with the inquiry, "What is your righteousness?" Not his new obedience; not his humbleness; no blossom from the wreath of his works, — but this alone, that he laid hold on Christ; for He had been prophesied to him.

Therefore St. Clement of Rome teaches: "We do not become righteous through ourselves, or through our wisdom, or through our fear of God, or through works which we performed in pureness of heart, but through faith, by which God has justified all from the beginning." This our fathers summed up in these three words, "By faith *alone*." Luther translates Rom. 3, 28: "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified without the deeds of the Law, by faith alone." And to those who protested against this version because the word "alone" is not found in the original text, he replies: "I am surprised at the opposition in this manifest matter. Do tell me whether the death and resurrection of Christ is our work. It certainly is not our work nor the work of any Law. Now, alone the death and resurrection of Christ make us free from sin, as St. Paul says. Furthermore, tell me, which is the work by which we take and hold the death and resurrection of Christ? It certainly must be no external work, but solely and only faith in the heart. This faith alone, yea, all alone, without all works, apprehends the death and resurrection of Christ where it is preached through the Gospel. . . . Now, if this is manifest, why, then, should we not also speak thus?" (Luther, St. L. Ed., XIX, 980f.) Article XX of the Augsburg Confession indeed uses this language four times. And the Apology advises those who are not pleased with the little word *sola* to erase in so many places in the epistles of St. Paul these words, "by grace," "not of works," "gift of God," "lest any man should boast." (*Trigl.*, 140.) Also the Formula of Concord confesses "that for the preservation of the pure doctrine concerning the righteousness of faith before God it is necessary to urge with special diligence the *particulæ exclusivæ*, that is, the exclusive particles, *i. e.*, the following words of the holy

Apostle Paul, by which the merit of Christ is entirely separated from our works and the honor given to Christ alone, when the holy Apostle Paul writes: *Of grace, without merit, without Law, without works, not of works.* All these words together mean as much as that we are justified and saved alone by faith in Christ." (*Trigl.*, 795.) The *Book of Confessions* of Duke Julius of Brunswick (*Corpus Doctrinae Julium*) declares with no less firmness that nothing must be put into the article of justification before God but what necessarily belongs into it, such as the pure grace and mercy of God, solely and exclusively the merit of Christ, our Lord, the alone-saving faith, which apprehends the grace of God and the merit of Christ, all of which the Scriptures combine and mean when they say, "by faith alone," "by grace," "for the sake of Christ, our Lord." But works are thus excluded in order that they be not mingled with the article of justification, neither as cause or merit of righteousness nor as means to acquire righteousness, or as the form or constituent part of justification, or under whatever other show or title it might be done. For also that would be false if one were to deduce or conclude this, that faith, in order to make righteous and save, must necessarily have with it good works, or that the presence of good works were necessary before God in order that faith might make us righteous before God, as though it could not accomplish this without works. For St. Paul testifies that this is false by ascribing and attributing justification before God solely to the grace of God, solely to the merit of Christ, solely to faith, and posits it alone in the reconciliation to God and in His receiving us into grace without any preceding, concomitant, or following works. So also Chemnitz teaches in his private writings, also Aegidius Hunnius, likewise Gerhard, together with their followers. Even V. E. Loescher still defends the old pure doctrine with zeal and earnestness. But the confession of the fathers lived, and still lives, especially in the church-hymns.

But we exclude good works "not in the sense that a true faith can exist without contrition or that good works should, must, and dare not follow true faith as sure and indubitable fruits, or that believers dare not nor must do anything good; but good works are excluded from the article of justification before God so that they must not be drawn into, woven into, or mingled with, the transaction of the justification of the poor sinner before God as necessary and belonging to it." (*Trigl.*, 927.)

But what is the disposition and nature of our faith? Is it a feeling of dependence, as some say? Maybe the "faith" of the

heathen is of this nature, for they neither know of God nor trust in Him; but not our faith; for our faith is knowledge and confidence. That it is knowledge is shown by those texts in which "believing" and "knowing" are joined together, forming one expression. Thus it is said John 6, 69: "We believe and are sure [Luther: "*haben erkannt*"] that Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God," and Eph. 4, 13: "Till we all come in the unity of faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God"; also John 17, 8: "I have given unto them the words which Thou gavest Me; and they have received them and have known surely that I came out from Thee, and they have believed that Thou didst send Me." But lest any one form the opinion as though faith and knowledge were altogether different things, Scripture, in the quoted texts, often simply says "knowing" for "believing." Is. 53, 11: "By His knowledge shall My righteous Servant justify many; for He shall bear their iniquities." John 17, 3: "And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent." At the same time other texts teach that eternal life consists in *faith* in Jesus. John 3, 16, 36; 5, 24; 6, 40. Now, either John contradicts John and Christ contradicts Christ in these texts, or "knowing" is "believing." Similarly we read 2 Pet. 2, 20: "After they have escaped the pollutions of this world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ," and 1 Tim. 2, 4: "God will have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." According to this it is certain that knowledge is one part of the essence of the Christian faith. True, not knowledge alone, but also confidence. Right there where justification by faith is described for the first time, Gen. 15, 6, the original text says Abraham "trusted" in God. Just so in many other texts: Is. 7, 9; Num. 14, 11; 2 Chron. 20, 20; Ps. 114, 10. Is. 28, 16 the same verb is applied to Christ: "Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a Stone, a tried Stone, a precious Corner-stone, a sure Foundation; he that believeth shall not make haste." This is also the basic meaning of the verb "to believe" in the New Testament. With the heathen authors it means to trust in men or in their words; in the New Testament, to trust in Christ. Such confidence in Him is the fundamental condition of all healing of the body, Matt. 9, 22; Mark 5, 36, and of the soul. Therefore the Lord says to the man sick of the palsy, Matt. 9, 2: "Son, be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee." And with his joyous "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" He urges His apostles to believe. But our faith is such a firm confidence that it banishes

doubt and sinks itself with all its might down into Christ, the Rock. [Note. — *Πιστεύειν εἰς Χριστόν*. Matt. 18, 6; Mark 9, 42; John 2, 11; 3, 16, 18; Acts 10, 43; Gal. 2, 16; Phil. 1, 29; 1 Pet. 1, 8.] Finally, God combines both parts of faith Is. 43, 10: "Ye are My witnesses, saith the Lord, and My Servant, whom I have chosen, that ye may *know* and *believe* Me and understand that I am He."

Whether we, therefore, say with Chemnitz that faith has four parts: knowledge, assent, longing of the heart, and confidence, or with Gerhard that it has three parts: knowledge, assent, and confidence, these two, knowledge and confidence, will always remain the chief ones. For knowledge and will are the two basic powers of our soul, and when the Holy Spirit moves it, it reaches with both its arms for the precious pearl. (Note. — God is the Author of faith, Matt. 16, 16, 17; Heb. 12, 2; His instrument is the Word, John 17, 20; Rom. 10, 17.) Therefore we teach with the Apology: "That faith which makes pious and righteous before God is not merely this, that I know the stories of Christ's birth, suffering, etc. (these things the devils, too, know), but it is the certainty or the certain trust in the heart, when with my whole heart I regard the promises of God as certain and true, through which there are offered me, without my merit, the forgiveness of sins, grace, and all salvation, through Christ the Mediator." (*Trigl.*, German text, 134.)

Good, says Perrone, and thence comes the happy disposition of the Protestants which enables them to comfort themselves with the forgiveness of their sins in fornication and murder if they only hold firmly to their faith. ("*Inde rursum originem habet illa securitas, illa jucunditas, qua inter fornicationes, adulteria, homicidia, aliaque ejusmodi peccata laetantur Protestantes, dummodo firmi in fide persistent, juxta Lutherum.*") Perhaps it is more convenient to use the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free for a cloak of maliciousness than the miracle-working medallion of Pope Gregory XVI. We shall leave the decision to Perrone. We, for our part, know nothing of forgiveness under unchastity and murder. The blood of Christ and sin agree like fire and water: either the water escapes in vapor, or the fire is extinguished. 2 Cor. 6, 15; 2 Tim. 2, 19. If a man says that he is saved in Christ and is a murderer, he lies, for "no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." 1 John 3, 15. "Neither fornicators nor idolaters, nor adulterers, . . . nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers . . . shall inherit the kingdom of God." 1 Cor. 6, 9, 10;

Gal. 5, 19—21. Therefore God's Word links repentance and faith together with an adamant chain. Paul himself at all times testified to both the Jews and Greeks "repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." Acts 20, 20, 21. Yes, the very first sermon which flowed from the lips of Christ was: "Repent ye and believe the Gospel." Mark 1, 15. These two go hand in hand throughout the whole Scriptures to the Revelation of John. Rev. 3, 3. Repentance is always the beginning, Acts 26, 20, so much so that God's Word sometimes includes faith in it and says "repentance" for both. Matt. 3, 2; 4, 17; Mark 6, 12; Luke 15, 7; Acts 11, 18; 17, 30. In fact, none other come to Christ but they that labor, Matt. 11, 28; neither does God give beauty for beauty, but beauty for ashes; not oil of joy for oil of joy, but oil of joy for mourning; and the beautiful garment of the righteousness of Christ no one receives but only they that mourn in Zion. Is. 61, 3. Therefore the psalms abound in penitential complaints: "Mine iniquities are gone over mine head; as a heavy burden they are too heavy for me." Ps. 38, 4. "Out of the depths have I cried unto Thee, O Lord. Lord, hear my voice; let Thine ear be attentive to the voice of my supplications. If Thou, Lord; shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?" Ps. 130, 1—3. (*Note.* — In general, the seven Penitential Psalms: Pss. 6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130, 143.) Thus our fathers complained with King David and then rejoiced with him: "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name, . . . who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases." Ps. 103, 1, 3. Therefore they also confessed at all times that the doctrine of justification exists for none other than terrified consciences and that it cannot be understood apart from the penitential conflict. (*Trigl.*, 55.) And the Smalcald Articles declare: "This, then, is the thunderbolt of God by which He strikes in a heap both manifest sinners and false saints . . . and drives them all together to terror and despair. . . . This is true sorrow of heart, suffering and sensation of death. This, then, is what it means to begin true repentance; and here man must hear such a sentence: You are all of no account, whether you be manifest sinners or saints; you all must become different and do otherwise than you are now doing. [Only then comes] the consolatory promise of grace through the Gospel." (*Trigl.*, 479f.) So also the Formula of Concord teaches (*Trigl.*, 923. 953—955), yes, even the much-maligned Confession of the faculty of Wittenberg of the year 1665. (*Consensus Repetitius Fidei Vere Lutheranae.*) And Martin Chemnitz says: "The pure

doctrine of the Word of God concerning justification can be understood by such only as in affliction are troubled on account of their sins or are trembling in the agony of death." And so they all teach. Repentance is wrought, however, by the Word of God, that breaketh the rock in pieces, Jer. 23, 29; not by the Gospel, which "is properly nothing else than the preaching of consolation and a joyful message" (*Trigl.*, 803), but by the Law (*Trigl.*, 478. 480. 955—961). God assists in this with the hammer of the cross. For vexation teaches to give heed to the Word. Repentance, however, is not a means of atonement (*Trigl.*, 257), neither is our faith; but the blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, cleanseth us from sins.

The Means of Grace.

Translated from Dr. E. Preuss's *Die Lehre von der Rechtfertigung*, Part IV.

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"Although the work of redemption was accomplished on the cross and forgiveness of sin acquired, yet it cannot come to us in any other way than through the Word. For what would we otherwise know about it that such a thing was accomplished or was to be given us if it were not presented by preaching, or the oral Word? . . . Or how can they apprehend and appropriate to themselves the forgiveness except they lay hold of, and believe, the Scriptures and the Gospel?" (Large Catechism. *Triglotta*, 759.) Therefore Paul calls the preached Word the means of salvation. 1 Cor. 15, 1. 2. But if it brings us salvation, it also brings us forgiveness; for salvation and forgiveness are the same thing. Yes, the Lord directly regards His Word as the bearer of His all-sufficient merits. For instead of saying: "Ye are clean through the obedience by which I made satisfaction to the Father," He says: "Ye are clean through the Word which I have spoken unto you." John 15, 3.

But where there is forgiveness through the merits of Christ, there is life. Titus 3, 7; Rom. 6, 20. [Note. — "For where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation." Small Catechism. *Triglotta*, 557.] Therefore the Lord also calls His Word the bearer of life. John 5, 24: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My Word and believeth on Him that sent Me hath everlasting life." And John 8, 51: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep My saying, he shall never see death." Yes, John 6, 63 He declares: "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." And John 12, 50: The Word of My Father "is life everlasting. Whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto Me, so I speak." [Note. — *Ἡ ἐντολὴ τοῦ πατρὸς ζωὴ αἰώνιος ἐστίν* does not mean: "He that keepeth the Law of the Father hath life everlasting," but according to John 17, 8: The words which My Father commanded Me to speak are the life everlasting.] If, therefore, the words of the Gospel are called the words of life, John 6, 68; Phil. 2, 16, then this means nothing else than that they contain and bring eternal life.

But how is this? Is not Christ *Himself* the Life? Did He not say to Thomas: "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life," John 14, 6, and to Martha: "I am the Resurrection and the Life," John 11, 25? Accordingly He linked the true life with faith in Himself. John 6, 40 He says: "This is the will of Him that sent Me that every one which seeth the Son and believeth on Him may have everlasting life," and John 11, 26: "Whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die."

True; and yet this is no contradiction; for the Son is in the Word. It is for this very reason that God's Word brings forgiveness of sins and life because it brings Christ. The vessel quenches the thirst because it is filled with water. And therefore all the dear fathers also drank deeply from it. And such in-one-another is not only possible, but within the limits of the kingdom of God also perfectly natural. Human promises are, of course, either lies or at best only shadows of things. But God *gives* when He speaks. "For He spake, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast." Ps. 33, 9. Men may indeed come and wish peace; that will not do much good; but when Christ steps into the midst of His trembling disciples with His salutation of peace, then their hearts, because of His words, become calm like the waves of the Galilean Sea. He giveth not as the world giveth. John 14, 27. If He, therefore, says to you in His Word: "He that believeth becomes righteous," and you believe, then you are righteous; for His Word is both almighty and true. Because it is the Word of the living God, therefore this Word, as upon wings, carries Christ's bloody merits into hut and palace. To speak with Luther: It is like unto a sled or conduit through which and on which Christ is brought to us. (St. Louis Ed., VI, 634.)

Also the words of Paul? Also those of Paul, yes, of all apostles. For between these words a chain is fastened which never breaks. Here the corner-stone is Christ: His words are life. John 6, 63; 8, 52. Thence the chain goes upward to the Father: Christ's words are the words of the heavenly Father. John 17, 8; 12, 50. And downward: the words of the apostles are the words of Christ, Luke 10, 16; 1 Pet. 1, 25; 1 Thess. 1, 8, yes, the words of God, Acts 4, 27, 29; Matt. 10, 20; 1 Cor. 2, 13. Therefore Paul writes to the Thessalonians: "For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the Word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but, as it is in truth, the Word of God." 1 Thess. 2, 13. In the first chapter of the Epistle to the Galatians he even threatens himself with the curse

if he should ever dare to alter anything in the Word of God which he had preached. Gal. 1, 9. 10. So it is God's Gospel whether it comes from the mouth of Christ or that of His apostles, and it truly brings with it forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation. [Note.— We say "Gospel"; for the Law, though it is also the Word of God, does not bring forgiveness.] Where can it be found? In Holy Scriptures, in the preaching [of the Gospel], and in the words of absolution. Here as well as there: under the pulpit, in the closet, and at the altar it makes righteous those who believe it. "Thus you see that the whole Church is full of forgiveness of sins." (Luther. St. Louis Ed., X, 634.)

But just as the Word of God is the means of grace, it is also the means of judgment. "He that rejecteth Me," says Christ, John 12, 48, "and receiveth not My words, hath one that judgeth him: the Word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the Last Day." God deals with us only through His Word; even man deals with man in no other way.

It is a peculiar objection that this doctrine, which is the doctrine of Holy Scriptures, separates God from the world and gives the Word an independent position beside Him. It is the omnipresent God that speaks through the Word; how, then, can one speak of separation? Or by what right dare my efficacious word be called a power independent of myself? God's Word stands *beside* Him, that is true. For the Apostle Paul, at his departure, commended the elders of Ephesus "to God *and* the Word of His grace." Acts 20, 32. It is, however, never independent of Him. But God Himself gives it at all times and in all places where there are people who receive it. John 17, 8. You ask, Why does God not communicate Himself without the Word? He does not wish to give His divinity uncovered, else we should have to die; for God has said: "There shall no man see Me and live." Ex. 33, 20. That ends the matter. Therefore God must conceal Himself, so that we can grasp and take Him. He could indeed have chosen some other means to cover Himself. But just as a physician endeavors to administer his remedies to the patient in a fluid to which he is accustomed, so God uses a means which is familiar to man, the voice of speech, to give him the merits of Christ.

Thus it is evident that we receive forgiveness in the Word. Whoever does not lay hold of it there may open his mouth as wide as he pleases, he will nevertheless not receive it, just as little as a wanderer will cross a stream if he does not use the bridge spanning it. Therefore we praise God from our whole heart for

having given us His Word, in which we can lay hold of His forgiveness. How could we otherwise “make a firm stand against the accusations of the divine Law, the great might of the devil, the terror of death, and, finally, against despair and the anguish of hell, if [we] would not grasp the divine promises, the Gospel, as a tree or branch in the great flood, in the strong, violent stream, amidst the waves and billows of the anguish of death”? (Apology. *Triglotta*, 213.)

Ancient and modern fanatics, however, are little pleased with this. They claim that every one must at least once in his life hear the voice from heaven: “Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee!” This, they claim, is justification. Luther complains: “They do not direct us into the outward Gospel, but into dream-land and say: ‘Stand in idleness, as I did, and you, too, will experience it. The heavenly voice will come, and God Himself will speak to you.’ . . . Do you see the devil, the enemy of divine order? How he . . . makes your mouth gape and meanwhile breaks down the path and way, the ladder, and everything by which the Spirit is to come to you, namely, the external ordinances of God in bodily Baptism, token, and oral Word, and wants to teach you, not how the Spirit must come to you, but how you must come to the Spirit, that you must learn to sail on the clouds and ride on the wind; and they do not say how or when, where or what, but that you will experience it as they did.” (St. Louis Ed., XX, 203.) In fact, God will not act with His Spirit in concealment, as it were, and in secret nor do something in particular for each one individually; otherwise no one could know where to meet and find Him. No; He has ordered matters so that forgiveness of sins is to be outwardly with the Word and Sacrament, so that we may know that what is being done there is truly being done by God. “Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? that is to bring Christ down [anew] from above” (who came down long ago), “or, Who shall descend into the deep? that is to bring up Christ [anew] from the dead” (who has risen long ago). (Rather,) “the Word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart; that is, the Word of faith, which we preach.” On this wise speaketh the righteousness which is of faith, according to Rom. 10, 6—8. And in order that no one may be in the dark as to how the apostle means this, he proceeds to say that justification comes to pass in this way, that you lay hold of the Gospel which is preached with your heart and confess it. “If thou shalt confess with thy mouth

the Lord Jesus and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Rom. 10, 9. 10. Where is there one syllable in this text concerning an immediate communication from God, concerning a heavenly voice or the like? It is rather the Word which brings forgiveness, that Word which the apostles preached. There, in this Word, you are to lay hold of forgiveness. If you do not lay hold of it there, you will in vain stand gaping up to heaven for it. Luther says: Verily, "enthusiasm inheres in Adam and his children from the beginning to the end of the world, having been implanted and infused into them by the old dragon, and is the origin, power, and strength of all heresy. . . . Therefore we ought and must constantly maintain this point, that God does not wish to deal with us otherwise than through the spoken Word and the Sacrament. It is the devil himself whatsoever is extolled as Spirit without the Word and Sacraments." (Smalcald Art. *Triglotta*, 497.) In this manner the Anabaptists fell into perdition, and to-day still many a one loses his faith in this way. First he hears a voice: "Thy sins be forgiven thee," which is true, but not on account of the voice, but on account of the Word of God. Then he hears another voice: "An office or great wealth will come to thee," which, however, does not come true. So his faith in the forgiveness is made to waver; for he concludes: "If the voice lied once, it lied twice." Therefore you should let voices remain voices and seek Christ in the Word; for there He is to be found. Not as though we denied the sweet comfort of the Holy Spirit in the heart; we rather rejoice in it. We say only this: The Comforter whom Christ sends, "speaks not of Himself; but whatsoever He has heard, that He speaks. . . . For He shall receive of Mine," says Christ, "and shall show it unto you." John 16, 14. 15. In this way He quickens God's Word in our hearts; and that is what the apostle means when he says of the justifying Word that it is in our mouths and in our hearts. Rom. 10, 8. For God's Word remains God's Word whether it comes to us through the memory or through the eye or through the ear. And it is never separated from God, as the word of Plato is separated from Plato; but it is always truly spoken by the living, omnipresent God. Therefore the people must be taught not to meditate upon voices which they have or have not heard, but to lay hold of the forgiveness which is present in the Word which they are hearing; there is justifica-

tion and assurance and everything. (Smalcald Art. *Triglotta*, 495.)

Moreover, the Word of God has in a special way assumed form, as it were, in the holy Sacraments. For the great fact that Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper bring forgiveness of sins is caused by the Word. (Luther. St. Louis Ed., XX, 275. 276; XIX, 1261; XVI, 1935.) Whether you take hold of the bare Word or the Word in the Sacrament, you always grasp Christ; for Gospel is Gospel, and faith is faith. Thus the Holy Supper brings forgiveness of sins by virtue of the Word; for "the words which stand here, namely: 'Given and shed for you for the remission of sins,' do it. Which words are, beside the bodily eating and drinking, as the chief thing in the Sacrament; and he that believes these words has what they say and express, namely, the forgiveness of sins." (Small Catechism. *Triglotta*, 557.) Christ, however, does not come by blood only, but by water and blood. 1 John 5, 6. Therefore the Scriptures testify of Holy Baptism that it saves: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Mark 16, 16. As in other texts, *justification* and damnation are placed in opposition to each other, so here salvation and damnation, which is an indisputable testimony for the fact that with salvation we receive justification and with justification, salvation. Thus St. Paul writes to Titus (chap. 3, 5): God, "according to His mercy, saved us by the washing of regeneration," and Peter: The water "saves us in Baptism," 1 Pet. 3, 21. For this the word "cleanse" is substituted in Eph. 5, 26; and Acts 22, 16 we read that Baptism washes away sins, and Acts 2, 38, that Holy Baptism is received for the remission of sins; yes, Gal. 3, 27 it is taught that in Baptism we put on the Lord Jesus, that is, that in Baptism we are clothed with His all-sufficient merits as with a garment, in order that our nakedness might not be seen. But Scripture comprehends the full glory of Holy Baptism in this one statement — new birth. "Verily, verily, I say unto thee," says the Lord to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." John 3, 3. Nicodemus does not understand this. Then the Lord explains what He means: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." John 3, 5. Where else than in Baptism does a birth "of water" take place? The remark of Calvin that water means Spirit and that "of water and of the Spirit" means "of Spirit and Spirit" is evidently rather an evasion than explanation. [Note. — *Aquam ergo et Spiritum simpliciter accipio pro Spiritu, qui aqua est.* —

Calvin.] But if it is said: First water and after twenty years Spirit, then it should be noticed, first, that the text does not say this; and secondly, this conception evidently conflicts with the picture which the Lord Jesus uses. Verily, if regeneration were a development which lasted for a period of two decades, the Lord could not have chosen a more unfortunate picture to illustrate it than that of birth, which takes place in a moment. But in order to leave no doubt that Baptism is in truth the birth of water and of the Spirit on which salvation depends, He, shortly before His departure, said plainly and without figure: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Mark 16, 16. Now I ask every one who is still able to see with his own eyes: To-day God says: "He that is born of water and of the Spirit shall be saved"; to-morrow He says: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved": now, is Baptism, apprehended by faith, the birth of water and of the Spirit, or is it not? If it is not, I am certainly anxious to know where the water will be found which is meant John 3, 5. The dear apostles at least knew none other than the baptismal water. Therefore they said of the baptismal water that it saves, 1 Pet. 3, 21, of the baptismal water that it cleanses, Eph. 5, 26, of the baptismal water that it washes away sins, Acts 22, 16, and that it brings the merits of Christ, Gal. 3, 27. Yes, St. Paul says, Titus 3, 5: God has "saved us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost." And here even Calvin does not dare to deny that the apostle is thinking of Holy Baptism. [*Note.—Per lavacrum regenerationis. Non dubito quin saltem ad baptismum alludat. Imo facile patiar de baptismo locum exponi, etc.—Calvin.*] But "how can water do such great things? It is not the water indeed that does them, but the word of God which is in and with the water, and faith which trusts such word of God in the water. For without the word of God the water is simple water only and no Baptism. But with the word of God it is a Baptism, that is, a gracious water of life and a washing of regeneration in the Holy Ghost." (Small Catechism. *Triglotta*, 551.) For when Scripture maintains these five propositions side by side: God saves, 2 Tim. 1, 9; 1 Tim. 2, 4; Jas. 4, 12; the merit of Christ saves, Rom. 5, 9; John 3, 17; 12, 47; Acts 4, 12; 15, 11; the Word of God saves, 1 Cor. 15, 2; Acts 11, 14; 1 Cor. 1, 21; Baptism saves, 1 Pet. 3, 21; faith saves, Luke 7, 50; Rom. 10, 9; Eph. 2, 8,—then these are either just so many contradictions, or God is the Physician, the blood of Christ the medicinal herb, the Word of God the fluid which contains it, and our faith the drinking thereof.

And Baptism? It is the invigorating bath which the Physician prescribes first for every one who places himself under His care.

So also the Fathers teach. "On this account let no one boast of his works," says the Apology, "because no one is justified by his deeds. But he who is righteous has it given him because he was justified in the laver [Baptism]." (*Triglotta*, 151.) And the Small Catechism answers the question: "What does Baptism give or profit?" as follows: "It works forgiveness of sins, delivers from death and the devil, and gives eternal salvation to all who believe this." (*Triglotta*, 551.) The Saxon Visitation Articles of 1592 teach with the same clearness: "There is but *one* Baptism and *one* washing [ablution]; not such as is wont to remove the filth of the body, but [such as] washes us from sins." And: "Through Baptism . . . God saves us and works in us such righteousness and cleansing from sins that he who perseveres in this covenant and confidence unto the end is not lost, but has eternal life." And: "Baptism is the washing of regeneration for the reason that in it we are born anew and sealed by grace." (*Triglotta*, 1153.) The Articles of Visitation reject, on the other hand, as erroneous and false the doctrine "that Baptism is an outward washing of water whereby an inner washing [ablution] from sins is *only signified*." Again: "That Baptism neither works nor confers regeneration, faith, the grace of God, and salvation, but *only* signifies and seals it." Finally: "That regeneration occurs not in and at [with] Baptism, but not till afterwards in adult years, and in some [many] not until old age." (*Triglotta*, 1155, 1157.) Aegidius Hunnius fights the same doctrine also in his private writings and declares that God in Baptism grants us two benefits: the reception into the relationship of children and new emotions in the heart, stating that the first is nothing else than justification. Gerhard teaches just as clearly: "Baptism is the efficacious means of the remission of sins" (*Baptismus est efficax medium remissionis peccatorum*); yes, God has instituted it for the very purpose of justifying us. And so they all teach.

But can it be said also of children that Baptism justifies them? They are certainly, it is argued, not yet able to partake of the merits of Christ. That was the reason why the disciples turned them away. Matt. 19, 13; Luke 18, 15. But what did Jesus say? "Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto Me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Matt. 19, 14; Luke 18, 15; Mark 10, 14. These "little children" cannot possibly have been fully grown up, for they were carried in the arms. Matt. 19, 13;

Mark 10, 13; Luke 18, 15. And the disciples did not chide the children, but those that bore them. Furthermore, the term which Luke employs to designate the children (*βρέφη*) is used in his writings only of the new-born or of the fruit in the womb. Luke 18, 15. [Note. — *Βρέφη*: of the new-born, Luke 2, 12; Acts 7, 19; of the fruit in the womb, Luke 1, 41, 44.] But the meaning of the “kingdom of heaven” which belongs to the children is shown Rom. 14, 17: “The kingdom of God is not meat or drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.” So, then, these three things belong to them: the righteousness of Christ, the peace of God, and the joy in the Holy Ghost. But does not Christ say, “Of such is the kingdom of heaven”? Matt. 19, 14. Happy are we that He did say so; otherwise no adult would get into heaven. But did He, with the words “of such,” wish to exclude the little children? Surely not; He rather made them the leaders of the procession to Salem. He says: “Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto Me”; they will be saved before all others; indeed, only such as they. [Note. — The *Hirschberg Bible* gives a very good explanation of the word “such” in Matt. 19, 14: “The children and those who, by committing themselves without malicious resistance to My arms of grace, become like them.” . . . Christ makes every misinterpretation of His words impossible by adding: “Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.” Mark 10, 15.] Heaven, however, does not belong to them for the same reason that it belongs to the angels, who are without sin, but in like manner as it belongs to sinful men; for they were conceived in sins. Ps. 51, 7; Job 25, 4; Ps. 58, 4; Gen. 8, 21. But sinners are saved in no other way than by water and the Spirit. John 3, 3, 5. Therefore children may not only, nay, they must be, baptized; “for,” says the Lord, “it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.” Matt. 18, 14. In obedience to this will the Christian Church has always baptized her little ones, so much so that St. John writes not only to the fathers and to the young men, but also to the children that their sins are forgiven for the sake of Jesus’ name, 1 John 2, 12, 13; so much so that St. Irenaeus teaches that regeneration [in Baptism] is given to the sucklings, and little children, and youths, and young men, and old men; yes, so much so that already Origen meditated on the question which sins are forgiven little children in Holy Baptism. [Note. — The originator of the evil custom of postponing Baptism to the adult years was Tertullian: “*Fiant Christiani,*

dum Christum nosse potuerint. Quid festinat INNOCENS aetas ad remissionem peccatorum?" (*De Baptismo*, II, 18.) He endeavored to abolish infant baptism because he did not understand the Scriptural doctrine of original sin. But if he tried to abolish it, it certainly must have been in common use at that time. Origen simply says: "*Ecclesia ab apostolis traditionem suscepit etiam parvulis baptismum dare.*" And, God be praised, the Church of Jesus Christ to this day baptizes her children. For to this day it is the will of our heavenly Father that none of these little ones should perish. And to this day no other way has been discovered to bring them into heaven than by water and the Spirit.

But does this not deny justification by faith? Do we with this doctrine not enter upon papistical ground? For if the sucklings are justified in their baptism, then it is certain that the Sacraments *can* at least be effective without faith, by simple application. True. But who says that the little children do not believe? Our observation alone can hardly decide in this matter. For we also observe no reason in them, and yet we do not conclude that they are brutes. What, then, does God's Word say? Already the fact that the Lord awards salvation to them is well worthy of our notice; for one might reason this way: "He who does not believe will not be saved; therefore they believe." But we do not reason that way. For else we might be censured for building incomprehensible doctrines upon artificial conclusions. If, however, God should anywhere in the Scriptures clearly declare that the children believe, then we would ask permission to abide by that statement of our God in singleness of heart. Now, Matt. 18, 6 teaches this very thing. In the first part of that chapter we learn that the disciples quarreled about which of them should occupy the first place in the kingdom of heaven. Then Jesus took a child and set him in the midst of them and said: "Whosoever shall humble himself as this little child, the same is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven." Matt. 18, 4. Then He proceeded to depict the glory of the children before their eyes: Whoso shall receive one such little child (ἐν παιδίον τοιοῦτο) in My name receiveth Me. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in Me (ὅνα τῶν μικρῶν τούτων τῶν πιστευόντων εἰς ἐμέ), it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea." Matt. 18, 6. The connection shows clearly that children are being spoken of in this passage, so that the evasion that "little ones" in this place means as much as "large ones" is out of place here. Just as little does the subterfuge that "*to believe*" means

"the mere possibility of believing," therefore really, "not to believe," satisfy our conscience. And even with such an interpretation the opponents of infant faith would have gained but little. For the Lord would still teach that infant faith, which they declare to be impossible, is possible. But one might say that the child in question was not a very little child. Maybe, although Christ calls it "little." But what will we do with Ps. 71, 6? There the psalmist prays: "By Thee have I been holden up *from the womb.*" (Luther's version: "*Auf dich habe ich mich verlassen* VON MUTTERLEIBE AN.") [Note. — Ps. 71, 6: נִסְּכָה, Niphal of נִסְכָּה, occurs six times in the Bible and always means "to lean upon." Judg. 16, 29; 2 Kings 18, 21; Is. 36, 6; 2 Chron. 32, 8; Is. 42, 2; Ps. 71, 6.] And Ps. 8, 2 the singer explains: "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast Thou ordained strength because of Thine enemies." According to the express testimony of Christ this was fulfilled when the children saluted Him in the Temple with their hosanna. Matt. 21, 15, 16. Finally, David * rejoices, Ps. 22, 9: "Thou [Lord] art He that took me out of the womb; Thou didst make me hope [believe] when I was upon my mother's breasts." [Note. — בָּטַח means "to trust." The Hiphil, . . . in all the five passages where it occurs in the Bible, means "to make one trust," "to cause to believe." Is. 36, 15; Jer. 28, 15; 19, 31; 2 Kings 18, 30; 22, 9.]

What shall we say to this? Shall we put new coats on all these texts to make them look different from the way God made them? That would be a tedious and very unpleasant task. I think we will come out honestly and say: "The Bible contains numberless errors, and this is one of them." Or we will bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ and believe that He is able to do what He says. Not as though we took bud and blossom to be the same or imagined that a child perceives and discerns just as we can. But this is what we confess, basing it upon the Word of God: The soul of the child grasps the hand which God offers to it in the Sacrament just as well as we, yea, even better. For does a child not cling to the neck of its mother with both its little arms when it sees an animal coming? And is the maxim, "I see it not, therefore it does not exist," really unassailable? Does it not, when seriously applied, lead to the denial of the existence of God and the soul? Is it not, after all, better to abide by the Word of God? Verily, I am afraid to judge it, for it will judge me.

* It must not be overlooked that the Messiah is speaking here, and hence this text is not pertinent. — Ed.

John 12, 48. Therefore we simply teach with Luther that the little children who are baptized believe through the power of the Word which is prayed over them. (St. Louis Ed., XIX, 589.) Or, as John Gerhard says: "The Holy Spirit, through Baptism, presents to the children both faith and forgiveness of sins. For the Scriptures link these two things, faith and forgiveness, together with an unbreakable chain" (*Spiritus Sanctus per baptismum et fidem et peccatorum remissionem infantibus donat, quum remissionem peccatorum et fidem adamantino quodam vinculo Scriptura sacra ubique conjungat*).

Against this argumentation, however, the objection has been raised that genuine justifying faith is a moral struggle for liberty; that it is degraded when it is brought into connection with children; that the model way of salvation is a way through the penitential struggle; that, if children are saved at all, this is possible only if they experience something which is similar to it or at least related to it. But God's Word sweeps such thoughts away like spider-webs. Mark 10, 15 we read: "Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein." Thus God's Son turns your entire order of salvation upside down. You say: "If a little child does not receive the kingdom of God as an adult, it will never enter therein." But Christ says: "All ye old, learned, pious people, even ye My dear disciples yourselves, ye will not be saved if ye do not wish to be saved in the same way as the children." Mark also the verb "receives." "To receive" means "to believe." When it is said, Acts 11, 1, that the Gentiles also received the Word of God, then this means that they believed it. When it is said of the Bereans, Acts 17, 11: "They received the Word with all readiness of mind," then this indicates their joyous faith. When, therefore, Christ testifies: "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein," then this means: "Whoever does not believe as a little child believes, he shall surely not be saved." [Note. — For also Mark 10, 15 has *δέχεσθαι*. And Rom. 14, 17 says what the *βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ* is, namely, righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. I confess that I am unable to comprehend how these three gifts, in fact, all invisible things, can be received in any other way than by faith.] This is Christ's order of salvation. It is hard to understand — and yet easy. Hard, because the Old Adam is so very anxious to drag a little package of merit, and were it only the merit of a penitential struggle, across God's boundary-lines. Easy, for the children have

one advantage over us adults — they have no will. And it is just this which hinders our salvation. [*Note.* — Or is something else in the way? Matt. 23, 37: “How often would I . . . and ye would not!”] For our will is free in the domain of sin and evil and has a strong tendency towards all that is evil; so free and so strong it is in this direction that we poor creatures, who are always burdened with this evilly inclined will cannot free ourselves from it in any other way than by fighting to the last drop of blood. But since God’s order of salvation consists in this, that we commit ourselves entirely to His fatherly hands, therefore He has given us the children as patterns. To us, indeed, the saying applies: “**Break thy will; endure afflictions!**” But, verily, the fact that we resist God so much is no point in our favor. Happy are we if in *this* respect we become like unto the sucklings by committing ourselves to our faithful God without resisting Him. But woe unto us if we do not consider such return to the estate of children necessary; for Christ says: “Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of God.” Matt. 18, 3.

This simple doctrine has always resounded in the Evangelical [Lutheran] Church. Martin Chemnitz developed it with special clearness in his examination of the Decrees of Trent. Gerhard did it still more fully, especially with respect to the faith of children. And thus it has been faithfully handed down to us, so that Spener still confessed: “Concerning the children we believe that in one and the same Baptism all things happen at the same time: the bestowal of faith, the justification, or remission of sins, and the remaining regeneration, or creation of a new nature in us.”

But the assertion that the honor bestowed upon the Sacraments encroaches upon the doctrine of “by faith *alone*” is at variance with the Scriptures and with history. With the Scriptures, for *they* designate the Word of God as the means of salvation just as often as they designate faith as such. With history, for all the confessions of our Evangelical [Lutheran] Church, from the Augsburg Confession down, emphasize both with equal force. The [Augsburg] Confession says: “Eternal righteousness, the Holy Ghost, eternal life, — these things cannot come but by the ministry of the Word and the Sacraments, as Paul says, Rom. 1, 16: ‘The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth’ ” [*Justitia aeterna, Spiritus Sanctus, vita aeterna. Haec non possunt contingere nisi per ministerium Verbi et sacramentorum, sicut Paulus dicit Rom. 1, 16: „Evangelium est potentia*

Dei ad salutem omni credenti"]. (*Triglotta*, 85.) And the Apology: "When we say: 'Faith alone makes godly' [*fromm*], we with the word *sola* do not exclude the Word and the Sacraments, as though the Word and the Sacraments were in vain, if faith does it all, as the adversaries charge us, *but it is the opinion of our merit in the matter that we exclude.*" [German text.] (*Triglotta*, 140.) (*Excludimus autem opinionem meriti. Non excludimus Verbum et sacramenta, ut calumniantur adversarii.* *Triglotta*, 141.) And the Large Catechism: "But as our would-be wise and new spirits assert that faith alone saves and that works and external things avail nothing, we answer: It is true, indeed, that nothing in us is of any avail but faith. . . . But these blind guides are unwilling to see this, namely, that faith must have something which it believes, that is, of which it takes hold and upon which it stands and rests. Thus faith clings to the water and believes that it is Baptism, in which there is pure salvation and life; not through the water . . ., but through the fact that it is embodied in [*i. e.*, connected with] the Word and institution of God and the name of God inheres in it. Now, if I believe this, what else is it than believing in God as in Him who has given and planted His Word into this ordinance and proposes to us this external thing wherein we may apprehend such a treasure? Now, they are so mad as to separate faith, and that to which faith clings and is bound, though it be something external. Yea, it shall and must be something external that it may be apprehended by the senses and understood and thereby be brought into the heart, as indeed the entire Gospel is an external, verbal preaching." (*Triglotta*, 739.) The same doctrine is taught by the Formula of Concord (*Triglotta*, 919. 929. 1087), the Book of Confessions of Duke Julius of Brunswick, and also by the theologians (Luther, St. Louis Ed., XII, 2437—2439; XVI, 1151; XIX, 587. 588. 590. 591).

We do not understand what is meant by the objection that we posit a non-living relationship to Christ. We posit nothing, but cling to the life-line which Christ throws out to us in the Word. He who refuses to take hold of the life-line, but requests the pilot rather to let him grasp his hands, will hardly be saved. If the king grants an audience in his castle, it certainly is better to approach him there with one's petition than to wait and see whether one may chance to meet him in the forest.

Finally, when it is said that it were ill-becoming in God to bind Himself to earthly matter: word, water, bread and wine, this vividly reminds us of Peter: "Lord, dost Thou wash my feet?"

Thou, the living God? With lowly water?" But what does the Lord reply? "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me." John 13, 8. This He also says to the fanatics: "If ye despise My lowly baptismal water and My lowly Word, ye have no part with Me."

Full Forgiveness.

Translated from Dr. E. Preuss's *Die Lehre von der Rechtfertigung*, Part V.
The REV. JUL. A. FRIEDRICH, Iowa City, Iowa.

All statements of the Scriptures concerning redemption, imputation, faith, and the means of grace rest on God's full forgiveness as their foundation stone. If God forgives half, then all the texts which speak of the all-sufficient redemption through the blood of Christ become uncertain. If God forgives half, then He does not impute the righteousness of Christ unto us in the same manner as He imputes our sins unto Him. If God forgives half, then faith loses its life-line, and the Word of God its contents. For if anything is clearly testified to in God's Word, it is God's full forgiveness. 1 John 1, 7: "The blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, cleanseth us from *all* sin." [Note. Nobody will claim that this full forgiveness remains in force if one wallows in filth.] Not of some, no, of all. And Col. 2, 13: "And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath He quickened together with Him [Christ], having forgiven you all trespasses." [Note. Evidently Baptism is here spoken of, as in this whole passage from V. 11 on. Also the word *συνεζωοποιήσεν*, which is separated from *χαρισάμενος* by only three words, shows this.] Yes, Rom. 8, 1 the Apostle says: "There is therefore no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." [Note. Of course, this does not exclude that one may fall from grace, that one may be cut out of the olive tree, if one does not, by watching and praying, continue in His goodness . . . it follows indisputably from this text that as long as a man abides in Christ Jesus through faith (Gal. 3, 26) — so long, not longer, but surely so long — the word applies to him: "No condemnation to thee."] In Paul's epistles condemnation and justification are antitheses which exclude one another like darkness and light. Rom. 5, 18. Where there is no light at all, there is complete darkness; and where there is no darkness at all, there is complete light. So, then, where there is no condemnation at all, there is full justification. Is that clear enough? And toward the end of the chapter Paul exclaims: "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died,

yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." This question is meant seriously: Who shall dare to quarter the forgiveness or take away but a hair's breadth of it when God justifies? And if any one would dare to do it, would that change God's judgment? It has been asserted that the forgiveness of sins in the Old Testament was incomplete, as could be seen from the fact that the Old Testament describes the forgiveness as a chief advantage of the New Testament. We do not wish to argue about the forgiveness of sins in the Old Testament at this time, but we do demand this, that he who subtracts from it because of the glorious promises which apply to the New Testament must at least not diminish these very same promises in respect to the New Testament. When, therefore, God promises through Ezekiel: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from *all* your filthiness . . . will I cleanse you . . . I will also save you from *all* your uncleanness . . . I shall have cleansed you from *all* your iniquities," Ezek. 36, 25, 29, 33, and through Micha: "He will have compassion upon us; He will subdue our iniquities; and Thou wilt cast *all* their sins into the depth of the sea," Micah 7, 19 — is all of this not to be true of the New Testament also? First you argue that forgiveness under the Old Covenant is fractional because full forgiveness was promised for the New Covenant only, and then you rob the New Covenant also of full forgiveness!

God be praised, the case is different. Even the term "to justify" proves this. "To justify" means "to absolve"; and as little as a defendant in a human court of justice remains half in prison while the other half is set free, just so little does God justify half and condemn half. I wonder how great the difference in the justification of individual persons would be if it were governed by the measure of their faith. And yet, Paul declares right there where he speaks most extensively of justification before God, that it is given *without difference* unto all them that believe. Rom. 3, 22. [Note. "*Ὅτι γὰρ ἔστιν διαστολή*" undoubtedly refers to that which immediately precedes." Philippi.] Yes, he bases the altogether equal gift of justification on the fact that all men are, before God, in altogether equal condemnation, Rom. 3, 23, and that they all receive the righteousness of Christ altogether freely (*δωρεάν*). Rom. 3, 24. [Note. *Πάντες* is the subject.] Indeed all are in altogether equal condemnation. For the Holy Spirit says: "Whosoever shall keep the whole Law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all," Jas. 2, 10. [Note. *Πάντων ἔνοχος*. Of course,

guilty of all commandments.] Therefore, to whom one sin is retained, all are retained. This word dispels all fractional forgiveness like a storm. In case you still have one unforgiven sin, you are guilty of the whole Law. But if all sins are retained where one is retained, then it follows that all are forgiven to him to whom one is forgiven. The righteousness of Christ is just as indivisible as the Law of God; it is either entire or not at all. This truth is also testified to by the parable in which Christ has described the procedure of forgiveness. A king takes account of a servant and finds that he owes him fifteen million dollars. Matt. 18, 24. The servant pleads for mercy, and the king, purely out of grace, forgives him, not one-half, not two-thirds, no, all the debt (*τὸ δάνειον*), immense as it was. Matt. 18, 27. Then the servant falls into grievous sin, and the outcome is that *all* the debt (*πᾶν τὸ ὀφειλόμενον*) is again demanded of him. Matt. 18, 34. So, then, he was at first entirely free, then entirely condemned. The argument that the fifteen million dollars or ten thousand talents designate only those sins which the servant remembered will not stand, for the original text expressly says that the servant was "a debtor of ten thousand talents." Matt. 18, 24. That was the exact amount of his debt. Not *he* had declared this to be the amount of his debt, but the lord had found that to be the amount in his reckoning — not a penny less, not a penny more. How is it possible, in the face of this parable, to speak of fractional forgiveness? Verily, if partial forgiveness were heard of in the kingdom of our God, here would have been the place for it. For, after all, what great crime had the poor servant committed? Naked as he was, he, perhaps, was sorely in need of the twelve dollars which he demanded of his fellow-servant. Could his lord then not say: "Half of my gift shall be taken from thee as punishment, the other half you may keep, for the present"? God does not act that way, for a manifest token that before His tribunal the sentence is either "damned" or "free." And the entire Holy Scripture, from Genesis to the Revelation of John, confirms this. Everything in it revolves around these great antitheses: friend of God or enemy of God; believer or unbeliever; child of light or child of darkness; God's own or the devil's own. And God's conduct conforms to this separation which, as a mighty chasm, extends through humanity — blessed or damned; death or life; judgment or salvation. "He that believeth hath everlasting life, shall not come into condemnation, is passed from death unto life." John 5, 24; 6, 40. 47. "He that believeth not is condemned already," John 3, 18. 36. And the

same rift extends into the next world — above the city with streets of gold, Rev. 21, 21; below the lake of fire, Rev. 20, 15. Blessed are they that have washed their robes “that they may have right to the tree of life and may enter in through the gates into the city,” Rev. 22, 14. “Without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie,” Rev. 22, 15. Whoever introduces a third factor between justification and condemnation in this life must also invent one for the next. [Note. Purgatory. See Conc. Trid., Sessio XXV, Decret. De Purgatorio. Also Sessio VI, Canon XXX: “*Si quis post acceptam justificationis gratiam cuilibet peccatori poenitenti ita culpam remitti, et reatum aeternae poenae deleri dixerit, ut nullus remaneat reatus poenae temporalis exsolvendae, vel in hoc saeculo, vel in futuro in purgatorio, antequam ad regna caelorum aditus patere possit: anathema sit.*”] It is well and good to say that in the hour of death the grace of Christ intervenes in a helping way and that he who hitherto was but imperfectly justified now covers himself wholly with the righteousness of Christ and in this adornment confidently goes to meet his Judge; but a true Christian does not postpone this till the hour of his death, but wholly covers himself every moment of his life with the garment of Christ’s righteousness. Besides, God finds no condemnation, not only in them that *die* in Christ Jesus, but also in them that *are* in Christ Jesus. And as long as no manuscript of Rom. 8, 1 is discovered which has “die” for “are” we shall oppose those who limit full justification to the hour of death. The blood of Christ is always our garment and always covers us completely. For the sake of this garment the Bible calls us saints. And as long as we believe, the faith of all of us is “like precious” (ἰσοτίμων). 2 Pet. 1, 1. [Note. *Petrus omnes fideles fidem ἰσοτίμων, aequè pretiosam, habere pronunciat, nimirum ratione generis et objecti. Infirma enim fides itidem apprehendit Christum ut fortis.* John Gerhard.]

The untenableness of the opinion of gradual forgiveness becomes still more apparent when it is applied to little children. If the measure of forgiveness depends on the measure of repentance, then either nothing or at least very little of the kingdom of God, of that kingdom of God which “is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy,” Rom. 14, 7, belongs to the little children. But Christ declares expressly that it belongs to the little children, yes, to them before others. Mark. 10, 14, 15. In fact, there is no greater contrast than that between gradual forgiveness

and Christ's order of salvation. The doctrine of gradual forgiveness says: There is only so much forgiveness, or at least only so much enjoyment of forgiveness, as there is penitential struggle. Full possession, or at least full enjoyment of forgiveness, is not for young girls of fourteen years, not to speak of younger ones, but only for persons of mature age, after restlessly pressing forward. Christ, on the other hand, says: "Full forgiveness for infants [*ganz kleine Kinder*] only; for persons of mature age, not at all, unless they be converted and become as little children." Matt. 18, 3; Mark. 10, 13. But, since the decision concerning salvation and damnation rests with Christ and not with some learned man, it will be well to abide by the order of Christ.

Also the Confessions of our Evangelical [Lutheran] Church teach the clear and explicit opposite of gradual forgiveness. The Apology says: "Justification is . . . the approval . . . of the *entire* person." *Justificatio non est certi operis approbatio, sed totius personae.* (Trigl., 181.) And the Small Catechism: "In which Christian Church He forgives daily and richly *all* sins to me and all believers. (Trigl., 545.) Mark well the words "daily and richly"! I should think that that is full forgiveness. And the Large Catechism says that "we have received forgiveness and a good conscience and *are entirely acquitted*, yet is our life of such a nature that one stands to-day and to-morrow falls." (Trigl., 725.) The Smalcald Articles teach with the same clearness: "That by faith . . . we acquire a new and clean heart, and God will and does account us *entirely righteous* and holy for the sake of Christ. . . . And although sin in the flesh has not yet been altogether removed or become dead, yet He will not punish or remember it. And such faith . . . is followed by good works. And what there still is sinful or imperfect also in them shall not be accounted as sin or defect, for Christ's sake, but the *entire* man, both as to his person and his works, is to be called and to be righteous and holy from pure grace and mercy, shed upon us and spread over us in Christ." (Trigl., 499.) And the Formula of Concord says: "Christ covers *all* our [their] sins . . . with his complete obedience. (Trigl., 923.) Is it possible to declare oneself more clearly against gradual justification and for the old order of salvation of Jesus Christ? And this doctrine is taught by all [our theologians]. The *Book of Confessions of Duke Ulrich of Mecklenburg* asks, XI, 5: "How does God forgive sins?" and answers: "Fully and perfectly." And Luther says: "Now we well know what forgiveness of sin means. If He forgives, He forgives *everything altogether and leaves nothing unforgiven*. Now, if I am rid of, and free from, sin, then

I am also rid of death, devil, and hell and am a son of God and a lord of heaven and earth." (St. Louis Ed., XX, 751.) In another place he says: "For this reason it is called forgiveness of sin, because we are, before God, real sinners, and nothing but sin is to be found in us, although we may have *all* human righteousness. For where He speaks of sins, there must be real and great sins, just as also the forgiveness is no jest, but a real and serious matter. Therefore, if you look at this article, you have both facts: sin takes away *all* your holiness, no matter how pious you may be on earth, and, *vice versa*, *forgiveness removes all sin and wrath*, so that your sin cannot hurl you into hell, and your piety cannot lift you into heaven." (St. Louis Ed., XI, 1721.) Luther teaches the same doctrine wherever he touches on this subject. (St. Louis Ed., XIX, 995; II, 1457; XI, 1703 ff. 1933.)

Are we to produce still more testimonies? Are we to show — and this would be an easy task — that our Evangelical Lutheran Church has confessed the doctrine of full forgiveness at all times? Are we to summon Martin Chemnitz to the arena? or Aegidius Hunnius? Hunnius says: There are no degrees in justification. For it is impossible that a man should have partly obtained forgiveness of sins and partly not. It is also impossible for a man to be partly in grace and partly without it, or to be an heir of eternal life and at the same time a child of the devil. But he that is justified *has obtained full forgiveness of all his sins* and is fully in grace and an heir of eternal life. For in justification our greater or lesser worthiness does not come into consideration, consequently our justification cannot be increased or decreased by our worthiness. Not even our faith conditions our justification in so far as it has this or that quality, being strong or weak, but only in so far as it apprehends its object, the merits of Christ. But the merits of Christ are indivisible.¹⁾ John Gerhard says: The Word of God "carefully distinguishes between justification and

1) *Justificatio nec magis recipit nec minus, quandoquidem fieri non potest, ut quis ex parte remissionem suorum peccatorum obtineat, ex parte vero non; nec quisquam partim in gratia est, partim extra gratiam; nec quis potest esse ex parte haeres vitae aeternae, ex parte vero filius gehennae et damnationis. Sed homo justificatus plenariam omnium peccatorum adeptus est veniam, et totus est in gratia Dei atque vitae sempiternae haeres. Neque spectantur in justificatione illae virtutes, quibus auctis vel diminutis ipsa quoque justificatio tale subeat vel incrementum vel decrementum. Quin ne quidem fides ingreditur justificationem, quatenus ex sua conditione aestimata nunc firma, nunc languida est, sed quod subjectum suum aspicit, quod aequabile semper est. Considerat quippe gratiam justificantis Dei, quae infinitate sua omnem inaequalitatem respuit. Considerat meritum Christi, quod, quia infinitum est et in justificationis actu totum apprehenditur, itidem hujusmodi graduum inaequalitatem in justificationis arcano non constituit. (A. Hunnius, *Articulus de Justificatione*, p. 102.)*

renovation. *Of justification, which consists in the forgiveness of sins and the imputation of the righteousness of Christ, it teaches that it is perfect, but that renovation grows from day to day.*"²⁾ And Henry Hoepfner, whose treatise on justification is perhaps the best we have, says: "Forgiveness of sins has no plus and no minus; God freely forgives all, exhibiting to all the same fulness of mercy. Therefore Scripture testifies that all who are justified, Jews and Gentiles, men and women, those of little faith and those of strong faith, are just as righteous as Abraham, the father of all them that believe."³⁾ And at another place he says: "Whoever is justified, that is, regarded as righteous, is not justified because of his righteousness, but by the all-sufficient righteousness of Christ. Therefore his righteousness cannot become greater or more abundant or more perfect before the tribunal of God."⁴⁾ And in that vein he continues throughout the whole book.⁵⁾ Calov declares with the same emphasis: "It is pure fiction to say that besides the perfect forgiveness there is also an imperfect forgiveness. For God forgives fully when He forgives, Ps. 32, 1; 103, 3 ff.; He cleanseth from all sin, 1 John 1, 7; He casts all our sins into the depth of the sea, Micah 7, 19, so that there is no more condemnation to us, Rom. 8, 1."⁶⁾ And Scherzer teaches: "The forgive-

2) Scriptura justificationem a renovatione accurate distinguit ac justificationem in peccatorum remissione et justitiae Christi imputatione consistentem perfectam esse, sed renovationem de die in diem crescere docet. (J. Gerhard, *Disputationes Theologicae*.)

3) Deus gratis ignoscit peccata non secundum magis et minus, sed aequali misericordia ac totaliter omnibus, sive majora sive minora peccata patrarint. . . . Qua de causa sacrae literae testantur, omnes, quotquot justificantur, Judaeos et gentes, mares et feminas, tam imbecillos in fide quam fortes, absque ullo discrimine justificari per unam eandemque fidem in Christum . . . et justos esse aequae ac Abrahamum, patrem credentium. (H. Hoepfner, *De Justificatione*.)

4) Qui justificatur, id est, justus censetur, universali justitia Christi, quae in facto est, ille non sua justitia justificatur: tantum abest, ut justitia ejus fiat major, auctior et perfectior coram Dei tribunali. (H. Hoepfner, *l. c.*)

5) Justificatio est *plena remissio peccatorum* et imputatio justitiae Christi. . . . Justificatio est actio judicialis, qua *Deus nos aestimat* non qualitercunque, sed *absolute justos*. (H. Hoepfner, *l. c.*)

6) Remissionem peccatorum aliam perfectam, aliam imperfectam esse, merum est commentum, quandoquidem peccata, dum remittuntur, plene remittantur, Ps. XXXII; Ps. CIII, 3 cet., . . . mundamur ab omnibus peccatis, I Joh. I, 7, . . . projicitur omnis iniquitas in abyssum maris, Michae VII, 19, . . . ut nulla in nobis sit condemnatio, Rom. VIII, 1. Qui ergo dubium esse potest peccata plene hic remitti? (Calovius, *Systema Locorum Theologicorum*.)

ness of sins in this life is perfect, so that no condemnation remains. Consequently also justification is perfect, it being nothing else than the forgiveness of sins." 7) Spener, going still more into detail, says: "Concerning the question whether a man grows more righteous and holier, we, too, concede this in respect to the inherent righteousness, which, of course, grows and must grow, so that we become more and more perfect. . . . But this does not pertain to justification, but to sanctification. It is not this which makes us pleasing to God or through which we become His children. Justification, however, is that beneficent act of God by virtue of which He receives us into grace and keeps us in His grace, in consequence of which we may stand in His Judgment. And here we cannot say that a greater or more augmented righteousness is to be found; but he who has forgiveness for his sins has complete forgiveness, and therefore no one has a more complete forgiveness than another. So it is obvious that they cannot say that the forgiveness of sins bestowed for the first time in Baptism is less perfect than that which one enjoys after one has exercised himself in good works for thirty or forty years. *Hence he who by imputation has received the righteousness of Christ by faith has it wholly*; for it is indivisible, and he cannot have a more perfect righteousness of Christ after twenty or thirty years than he received in the first moment. Hence all believers must have an equal righteousness in which they may stand before God." And the pious Fresenius writes: "Just as the merit of Christ is conveyed to the believers in its entirety and at the same time, so *also all sins are forgiven at the same time.*" And in another place he says: "Now, Christ and His righteousness are indivisible. Whoever has Him has Him wholly. . . . Hence it follows without contradiction that he must also be wholly righteous because his Savior brings him His entire righteousness." Nicolaus Hunnius, Caspar Loescher, D. Hollaz, Burk, Thomasius, and Frank teach the same doctrine. Lastly, Philippi writes with great clearness: "After all, the fact remains that justification, as the imputation of the perfect righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ, is incapable of growth, grades, or degrees, but from beginning to end is perfect in itself. There are indeed degrees of faith, but no degree of justification, because also the infirm faith, if it be but upright, apprehends the righteousness of Christ, which,

7) In hac vita contingit perfecta peccatorum remissio, ita ut nulla remaneat condemnatio. Ergo etiam perfecta justificatio, quae nihil est aliud quam peccatorum remissio. (J. Ad. Scherzer, *Systema Theologiae*.)

verily, needs no perfecting through our faith or our works." Will these testimonies suffice? Or must we proceed and let "the singing Church" testify in behalf of full justification? She sings:—

Sins are truly here forgiven. . .
All flesh shall rise again.⁸⁾

And again:—

He canceled my offenses,
And saved my soul from death;
'Tis He who ever cleanses
Me from my sins through faith.
In Him I can be cheerful,
Bold, and undaunted aye;
In Him I am not fearful
Of God's great Judgment Day.

Naught, naught can e'er condemn me
Nor set my hopes aside;
Now hell no more can claim me,
Its fury I deride.
No sentence e'er reproves me,
No ill destroys my peace,
For Christ, my Savior, loves me
And screens me with His grace.⁹⁾

And again:—

There His Word is preached to me;
*From all my sins He makes me free.*¹⁰⁾

Our hymn-books abound in such testimonies. Whoever accepts them seriously actually renounces the doctrine of gradual forgiveness. Pray do not deceive yourself by making a distinction between possession and enjoyment. The whole earth has been in possession

8) Hie *all' Suend' vergeben werden,*
Das Fleisch soll auch wieder leben.

9) Mein Jesus hat geloeschet,
Was mit sich fuehrt den Tod;
Der ist's, der mich rein waeschet,
Macht *schneeweiss*, was ist rot.
In ihm kann ich mich freuen,
Hab' einen Heldenmut,
Darf kein Gerichte scheuen,
Wie sonst ein Suender tut.

Nichts, nichts kann mich verdammen,
Nichts nimmet mir mein Herz!
Die Hoell' und ihre Flammen,
Die sind mir nur ein Scherz.
Kein Urteil mich erschreckt,
Kein Unheil mich betruet,
Weil mich mit Fluegeln decket,
Mein Heiland, der mich liebt.

10) Da laesst er sein Wort verkunden,
Machet uns ledig von allen Suenden.

of forgiveness since the death of Christ on the cross. In the justification of the individual person the point is always the enjoyment, the fact that the righteousness of Christ saves *me*, is for *my* benefit, is enjoyed by *me*. And this is done through faith. Through faith we enter into the enjoyment of the good things which Christ has purchased for us. According to the doctrine of the Evangelical [Lutheran] Church we thereby enter into their full enjoyment; according to the opinion which teaches a gradual forgiveness we enter only into their partial enjoyment. Now, when Paul Gerhardt sings: "Naught, naught can e'er condemn *me*," he does not only magnify that which Christ has merited upon the cross, but this is what he magnifies: that he, Paul Gerhardt, through faith has entered into the full enjoyment of these merits; that to him, the said Pastor Gerhardt, there is absolutely no condemnation, and this on account of the imputed righteousness of Christ. Whoever with his whole heart and mind joins in singing this thereby confesses the full enjoyment of forgiveness, that is to say, the very opposite of the doctrine of gradual forgiveness.

In order to prove this doctrine, which formerly was not heard of in the Evangelical [Lutheran] Church, Luke 18 has been pointed to. A Pharisee and a publican "went up into the Temple to pray. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus within himself, God, I thank Thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me, a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other." Luke 18, 10—14. It is claimed that the Lord here expressly speaks of degrees in justification. And this is held to be the case even if one assumes with Luther that the publican went home fully justified. So, then, the Pharisee was also justified even though it was in a somewhat less degree than the publican. Now, please, consider just for a moment: A man of the class of those who made clean the outside of their cups and platters, but within they were full of extortion and excess, Matt. 23, 26, such a man dares to praise himself in the presence of God as compared with notorious robbers. A man of the class of those who appeared beautiful outward, but were within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness, Matt. 23, 27, such a man dares to boast of his righteousness in the presence of God, Luke 18, 11. A man of the class of those who paid tithes of mint and anise and cumin and omitted mercy and

faith, Matt. 23, 23, such a man dares to brag of his tithes in the presence of God, Luke 18, 12. And in such shameful hypocrisy he struts about; not in any way does he desire justification or ask God for anything whatsoever. And this man also is believed to have received divine forgiveness!¹¹⁾ I think the analogy of faith, after all, is not entirely useless in exegesis.

The Fifth Petition of the Lord's Prayer has been used as an argument against our doctrine. In this petition, it is said, we ask for forgiveness not only of the sins of the last twenty-four hours, but of all our sins, of all the evil we have done each and every day of our lives. Let this, for the moment, be granted. We merely ask, Is such a prayer heard? I think it is; for "if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us; and if we know that He hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him." 1 John 5, 14. 15. Now, the Fifth Petition certainly is according to the will of God, "for He Himself has commanded us so to pray and has promised to hear us. Amen, Amen, that is, yea, yea, it shall be so." If we, therefore, in the Fifth Petition ask for the forgiveness of all our sins and if God hears us, as He must, then we have full forgiveness. And that is all we want, absolutely all. For we cheerfully grant that this full forgiveness is no license to sin, on the contrary, that it must be held fast by daily repentance and faith if it is not to slip away from us.

The baptism of John the Baptist has also been mentioned to show the possibility of incomplete forgiveness. It has even been asserted that the baptism of John did not offer as much salvation as the baptism of Christ. That is Romish doctrine.¹²⁾ Up to the coming of Rationalism the Evangelical [Lutheran] Church constantly preached the opposite. All her teachers, from Luther to Spener, have confessed that the baptism of John worked regeneration just as well as the baptism of Christ. If the [so-called] Christian consciousness of to-day does not believe that, it must square itself with the Word of God; but under no circumstances

11) Of course, *παρ' ἐκεῖνον*, Luke 18, 14, means "passing by the other." So the publican was justified while the Pharisee was passed by. This is the explanation of all exegetes of the Evangelical [*i. e.*, Protestant] Church, from Luther down to Lange and Meyer. Luther: "The other, the Pharisee, went his way not justified, but damned."

12) *Si quis dixerit, baptismum Joannis habuisse eandem vim cum baptismo Christi, anathema sit. (Concilium Tridentinum, Sessio VII, De Baptismo, Canon I.)*

is it at liberty to set aside the old Evangelical [Lutheran] doctrine as an invention of only yesterday. It makes a peculiar impression, indeed, on one who is familiar with the writings of the Fathers to see the doctrine of Bellarmine designated as self-evident truth while the unwavering confession of the Evangelical [Lutheran] Church is treated as a strange error, which really should not be entertained by any one. Will the reader nevertheless listen to a few humble remarks? Is it really a fact that Christian Baptism did not begin earlier than Matt. 28? Did not the apostles of the Lord, in His name and by His express command, baptize long before that time? Do we not read John 3, 22: "After these things came Jesus and His disciples into the land of Judea; and there He tarried with them and baptized"? What was the nature of that Baptism? Was it efficacious or non-efficacious? If it was efficacious, what, then, hinders us from saying the same thing of the baptism of John, which was administered contemporaneously? John 3, 22. 23. Did not God expressly call John to baptize? Luke 3, 2. 3; John 1, 33. And did not Christ Himself give testimony in behalf of the baptism of John? Matt. 21, 24—27; Mark 11, 28—33. Was it not administered for the remission of sins? Luke 3, 3; Mark 1, 4. No one maintains that the baptism of the apostles did more. And was it not a means of "fleeing from the wrath to come"? Luke 3, 7. Does our baptism do more? Indeed not. But the baptism of the apostles did more inasmuch as it was accompanied by a miraculous outpouring of the Spirit, the like of which was not heard of before or nor has been afterward. But such extraordinary gifts of grace in no wise rest upon a more abundant measure of forgiveness, so little, in fact, that the Lord declares: "Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? and in Thy name have cast out devils? and in Thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I *never* knew you; depart from Me." Matt. 7, 22. 23. "I *never* knew you," says the Lord, not even at the time when you wrought miracles in My name. This shows that one's position in the kingdom of God in no wise depends upon the measure of the gifts of grace. But if the conclusion, "More Spirit, more forgiveness," is wrong and if the baptism of John brought remission of sins and saved from the wrath to come, then it cannot have been different from the baptism of the apostles in respect to the *chief thing*. The fact that John the Baptist testifies concerning himself that he must decrease and Christ increase, John 3, 30, has not the least to do with the question concerning [the efficacy of]

his baptism. The apostles, too, were as nothing compared with their Lord, 1 Cor. 3, 7, 8, and yet their baptism was efficacious. This, however, is the chief difference between the baptism before Easter and the baptism after Easter: before Christ's going to the Father, God forgave for the sake of the sacrifice which was to take place; afterwards He forgave for the sake of the sacrifice which had taken place!³⁾ It was that way in the Old Covenant, too. In the Old Covenant also the saints were saved through the grace of Jesus Christ; for the blood of Christ was efficacious before He shed it. True, it has been said that this is an invention of the theologians, for which not one single proof-text can be quoted from Scripture. But it has also been said that the use of "for" as denoting the basis of discernment [*Erkenntnisgrund*]⁴⁾ cannot be shown from a single really adequate example from the Holy Scripture, and yet one was found later on. Now, since no one is infallible, neither the Fathers nor their contemporaries, it is perhaps advisable to consult the Bible itself. There certainly was forgiveness of sins in the times of the Old Testament. Scripture testifies to this in about a hundred texts!⁵⁾ And our opponents do not deny this. Now Heb. 9, 15 plainly states that the death of Christ took place "for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament."⁶⁾ "For then," so he proceeds v. 26, "must He often have suffered since the foundation of the world." But perhaps the objection will be raised that we are severing v. 26 from its connection and arbitrarily combining it with v. 15. Very well. We will show the connection, and the reader may decide for himself. In v. 25 the apostle had declared that Christ did not enter into heaven "that He should offer Himself often." He proves this in the following

13) Of course, there are still other differences, especially the abundant and miraculous outpouring of the Holy Ghost, which since Acts 2 was wont to accompany the baptism administered by the apostles.

14) "For" used as a conjunction introducing an elliptical clause of reason. — *The translator.*

15) Ex. 34, 7; Num. 14, 1. 18—20; Ps. 32, 1. 5; 78, 38; 85, 3; 99, 8; 103, 3; Micah 7, 18; Ps. 31, 6; Is. 29, 22; 43, 1; 44, 23. With the help of a concordance these thirteen texts could easily be increased to eight times this number.

16) Ideo earum, quae sub vetere, h. e., durante Veteris Testamenti statu, commissae fuerunt, transgressionum in specie meminit, quia de illis dubitari poterat, an per Christi mortem fuerint expiatae, quum ante Christi adventum fuerint commissae. (John Gerhard, *Com. in Epist. ad Hebraeos*, 229.)

manner: If it were necessary that after His ascension the sacrifice of Christ must be repeated from time to time in order to atone for our sins, then this would have been necessary also several thousand times before the advent of Christ, yes, from the foundation of the world; for before the advent of Christ, too, there was sin and forgiveness of sin. But just as the sins of the Fathers were all blotted out through the one and all-sufficient sacrifice of Christ, just so the sins of the saints are forgiven now and in all eternity for the sake of this sacrifice, which need not be repeated.¹⁷⁾ Verily, if one wishes to call the doctrine that the blood of Christ was efficacious before He shed it an invention of theologians, then the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews must be numbered among them. And he is not the only one. St. John believed the same thing. At least he used the peculiar expression, Rev. 13, 8 that "the Lamb," namely, Christ, "was slain from the foundation of the world." What does this mean? Christ was not literally slain from the foundation of the world, but only once, under Pontius Pilate. Neither can the text be understood as speaking of a slaying in the counsel of God, for it does not say "before," but "from the foundation of the world." Consequently the text is speaking of the fruit of the sufferings of Christ. In this sense, and in this sense only, can it be said that Christ died from the foundation of the world, that is to say, from the foundation of the world the death of Christ was so present in the mind of God that He forgave sins for the sake of this death. Therefore Isaiah does not say, "He *will* bear our sins," "He *will* carry our infirmities," "the Lord *will* lay on Him our sins," but "Surely He *hath borne* our griefs," "He *carried* our sorrows," and "The Lord *hath laid* on Him the iniquity of us all."¹⁸⁾ Yes, he says: "Through His [Christ's] stripes healing comes to us [hath come to us]." Is. 53, 5. In this sense Christ

17) Probat, quod dixerat, Christum non ideo introiisse in coelum, ut saepius seipsum offerat. Vis argumenti in eo consistit: Si fuisset necessarium, saepius repeti sacrificium Christi, postquam ipse in mundum venit ac pro nobis passus est, utique etiam illud fieri debuisset ante Christi adventum, imo jam inde a prima mundi origine, quia etiam illo tempore homines fuere peccatis obnoxii ac proinde purificationis indigni. Sed quemadmodum peccata piorum, qui ante Christi adventum vixerunt, unico illo sacrificio Christi in ara crucis oblato fuerunt mundata, ita quoque absque ulla sacrificii illius repetitione futuris temporibus omnes credentes per ipsum mundantur. (John Gerhard, *l. c.*, p. 242 sq.)

18) Is. 53: נָשָׂא, כָּבַל, חֲשַׁבְנִי, נִרְפָּא, הַפְּנִיעַ. All these verbs are in the perfect tense.

was slain from the foundation of the world!¹⁹⁾ True, the Socinians have endeavored to break the force of this argument by translating Rev. 13, 8 as follows: "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him [the dragon], every one whose name is not written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the slain Lamb." We do not wish to appeal to the position of the words in the original text in order to show that this translation is wrong; although it clearly speaks for us,²⁰⁾ we will rather grant for a moment that the Socinians understood the text correctly. Even in that case we have the proposition that the names of the righteous in the days of imperial Rome are from the foundation of the world written in the book of the slain Lamb. But how can names be written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the slain Lamb if the Lamb was not slain from the foundation of the world?²¹⁾ So the Socinians have, after all, been caught in a trap.

And did not Peter say in the Apostles' Council that he believed that he should be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ? Acts 15, 11. This statement strikes the Socinians so hard that in their catechism²²⁾ they deem it necessary to use fully a page and a half endeavoring to refute it. The passage, says the catechism, reads thus: "Now, therefore, why tempt ye God to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that through the grace of the

19) Praeterquam quod prophetis usitatum est propter certitudinem vaticiniorum res futuras praeteriti temporis exprimere, respectus hic [Jes. 53] habetur ad fructum passionis Christi, qui se ad Vetus Testamentum non minus extendit quam ad Novum, unde agnus dicitur occisus ab origine mundi. Profuit Christi passio, antequam fuit; quid ergo mirum, quod verbis praeteriti temporis ea exprimatur. (J. Gerhard, *Loci*, III.)

20) In the writings of Thucydides and Xenophon everybody would understand the clause τοῦ ἀγρίου τοῦ ἐσφαγμένου ἀπὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου to mean: "The Lamb that was slain from the foundation of the world."

21) Duo rogo: Unum, ita ordinata esse verba Apoc. XIII, 8, ut clare testentur, Christum esse occisum ab origine mundi. Et quanquam verborum trajectiones non sunt plane insolentes in codice sacro, tamen eae nunquam admittendae sunt, nisi ubi evidens id urgeat necessitas, quae hic nulla est. Alterum: non posse inscribi homines ab origine mundi libro agni mactati, nisi agnus ab origine sit mactatus. Quocirca si vel maxime admittitur trajectio verborum, quam Sociniani tantopere urgent, incolumis adhuc perstat nostra probatio. (Brochmand, *Systema*, II, p. 208.)

22) *Catechismus Racoviensis*. [*Catechesis Ecclesiarum Polonicarum*, published in Polish 1605, in Latin 1609. Racow (or Rakow), a small town in Russian Poland, was the center of the Polish Socinians at the end of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth century. See *Concordia Cyclopaedia* sub "Socinianism" and "Socinians." -- *The Translator*.]

Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they." Acts 15, 10, 11. And then the catechism explains that the pronoun *they* refers to the Gentiles. To whom? To the Gentiles? Why, the apostle had just spoken of the "fathers." V. 10. Besides, in the original text the pronoun *they*²³⁾ is masculine, like "the fathers," but the noun *Gentiles*²⁴⁾ is neuter gender. Now, nobody refers a masculine pronoun to a neuter noun without urgent reason, especially if a masculine noun is much closer. Besides, the entire argument of St. Peter would be perverted in a most ridiculous manner if we would explain it according to the Racow Catechism. The manner of the justification of the Gentiles was under discussion in the Apostles' Council at Jerusalem. Acts 15. Some had asserted that faith alone was not sufficient, but that the Gentiles must also be placed under the Law. Acts 15, 5. And now imagine, Peter arises and proves — what? Not the justification of the Gentiles by the justification of the apostles, but the justification of the apostles by the justification of the Gentiles?²⁵⁾ Wonderful logic, indeed! But is it not rather this way, that Peter wishes to establish that the Gentiles can be saved without the Law? He uses two arguments to prove this. First, he shows that the Gentiles have already received the Holy Ghost, Acts 15, 8, 9; secondly, that even the fathers, who were under the Law, were not saved by the Law. Acts 15, 10, 11. For it would certainly be the height of folly arbitrarily to impose a law upon the Gentiles which did not even save those to whom God had given it. "Then all the multitude kept silence," we read Acts 15, 12; and that was proper, for this argument was irrefutable, and therefore a resolution based on it was passed. Acts 15, 22—29. This very plainly is what Acts 15, 11 teaches. Also the Apology of the Augsburg Confession found this to be the meaning of this passage (*Triglotta*, p. 137); and since the days of Augustine it has often been stated and demonstrated with strong proofs. In addition, Acts 10, 43 Peter declares the same thing, by saying that "*all the prophets* give witness to Him [Christ], that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins." And Rom. 3, 21 Paul says that the imputed righteousness of Christ is "witnessed by the Law and the

23) Ἐκεῖνοι . . . πατέρες, vv. 11, 10.

24) τὰ ἔθνη, v. 7.

25) The formula καὶ ὃν τρόπον reasons from a known (ἐκκεῖνοι) factor to one which is still in controversy. 2 Tim. 3, 9; Acts 10, 47; 11, 17; 15, 8.

prophets.”²⁶⁾ This testimony gave to Old Testament believers the assurance of forgiveness of sins. Therefore the Lord said to the Jews: “Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life.” John 5, 39. And they verily would have had it if they had only been willing to see that the Scriptures testify of Christ. Therefore Paul writes of the Scriptures of the Old Testament to Timothy that they are able to make him “wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.” 2 Tim. 3, 15.

But putting all this aside, what will those people who incline towards Socinianism do with 1 Cor. 10, 4 and Heb. 11, 26? 1 Cor. 10, 1. 4 we read: “Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant how that all our fathers were under the cloud . . . and did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them; and that Rock was Christ.” What did they drink? Of the rock? But no rock followed them. And what is more, the apostle is not at all speaking of a material, but of a spiritual rock. “And that Rock was Christ.” So, according to the clear words of the text, the Israelites in the desert drank Christ?²⁷⁾ John 4, 14, compared with chap. 6, 35, shows what this means, namely, that they apprehended the merit of Christ by faith. Therefore the saints in the Old Covenant had the same fountain of grace and the same way of drawing from it as we have. Heb. 11, 24—26 is still stronger: “By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; *esteeming the reproach of Christ greater than the treasures in Egypt.*” Pray, what will people who banish Christ the Lord from the Old Testament do with this passage?²⁸⁾ Either the apostle speaks nonsense, — which God forbid! — or his meaning is this: The reproach of Christ is that reproach which Christ suffers. But Christ suffers in His members. Christ calls from heaven: “Saul, Saul, why per-

26) What sense would there otherwise be in the statement Heb. 11, 7, where Noah is called an “heir of the righteousness which is by faith”?

27) Christ is compared to a rock for several reasons. *Est metaphora in subjecto (petra). Non enim loquitur de petra naturali, sed spirituali et de hac praedicat, quod sit Christus. Patet hoc etiam ex altero, quod de illa petra praedicatur, quod nimirum Israelitas secuta fuerit in deserto. Non enim petra illa materialis secuta fuit. (Balduin.)*

28) The apostle does not say: “Moses esteemed such a reproach as later on Christ among others suffered greater riches than the treasures in Egypt,” but τὸν ὀνειδισμόν τοῦ Χριστοῦ, “the reproach of Christ.” He knows but one reproach.

secutest thou *Me*? Acts 9, 4. And yet Saul had persecuted the Christians. So it is as clear as day that also in the days of Moses, Christ was being persecuted in His members. If it had been his own reproach or only the reproach of his people which Moses chose, God would not have rewarded him for it. But because all reproach which Israel suffered in Egypt was meant for Christ and therefore was really and literally the reproach of Christ, it is said: "Moses esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward."²⁹⁾ Heb. 11, 26. And this recompense of reward he received abundantly; for he was with Christ on the Mount of Transfiguration (Luke 9, 30) and (v. 31) spoke with Him "of His decease which He [Christ] should accomplish at Jerusalem." Thus he suffered with Christ and was glorified with Him. Rom. 8, 17. Or in what other way was he made so blessed and so glorious, blessed and glorious long before the death of Christ on the cross? Was it for the sake of his works? Moses? That Moses who was punished for his unbelief, not being permitted, on account of it, to enter Canaan? Num. 20, 12; 27, 12—14; Deut. 34, 4. 5. No, Moses was blessed and glorified for no other reason than for Christ's sake. Who will dare deny this of a man who according to the express testimony of Scriptures suffered the reproach of Christ and tasted the glory of Christ? God says Rom. 8, 30: "Whom He justified, them He also glorified." Now He did glorify Moses, glorified him already before the death of Christ. Hence it follows that He truly justified him, justified him already before the death of Christ. Will you *still* say that the doctrine that the blood of Christ was efficacious before He shed it is an invention of the theologians?

And what sort of logic is it to assert that there indeed was forgiveness in the Old Testament, but not for Christ's sake? If God forgave Abraham and David without the intervention of the sacrifice of Christ, then He can forgive everybody without the intervention of Christ's sacrifice. There we have the dear old "Father of All" [*Allvater*] of the Rationalists, who connives at sin. Our God does not forgive without the shedding of blood. Heb. 9, 22. But since the blood of bulls and of goats does not take away sins,

29) [Ὁ ὀνειδισμὸς τοῦ Χριστοῦ] "*est afflictio, quae infligitur intuitu et odio fidei in Christum. Fideles itaque sub veteri testamento etiam in Christum crediderunt. Vocatur istud opprobrium Christi, non tantum ideo, quia ecclesia patitur propter Christum, set etiam, quia Christus suum facit, sicut, e. g., Act. IX, 4: 'Saul, Saul, quid me persequeris?'*" (Seb. Schmidt, *Com. in Ep. ad Hebraeos*, p. 1244.)

Heb. 10, 4, therefore, whenever God in the Old Testament forgave but one single sin, He forgave for the sake of the blood of Christ. Our opponents say: If God regarded Abraham as perfectly righteous for Christ's sake, then the death of Christ was superfluous. Exactly the reverse is true: If the justice of God permitted the granting of the very least forgiveness without regard to the death of Christ, then God could have dispensed with the death of Christ altogether. The only reason why Christ died was that the justice of God did *not* permit such forgiveness. The retroactive power of the blood of Christ is most clearly seen in those instances where He forgave sins before He died upon the cross. Did He not say to the man sick of the palsy: "Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee," Matt. 9, 2, and to the woman who was a sinner, Luke 7, 48. 50: "Thy sins are forgiven. . . . Go in peace"? We know very well by whose power this was done, but the question is for whose sake it was done. Did not Christ here publicly anticipate the fruit of His bitter death? Or if it was sufficient for forgiveness that He merely came and forgave, why, then, did He die? Now, just as He, in view of the shedding of His blood on the cross, absolved the man sick of the palsy and the great sinner, just so and just as fully did He, in view of the shedding of His blood, regard Abraham and David righteous. Not this is an invention of the theologians, that the blood of Christ had retroactive power, but this, that forgiveness was ever granted without the blood of Christ. Let us, therefore, avoid such Socinian doctrine and abide in singleness of heart by the Word of God, and let us do this the more cheerfully because we know that Melanchthon and Luther and the dear Fathers constantly confessed this doctrine. The Apology says: "The promise of Christ who was to come was transmitted from one patriarch to the other, and they knew and believed that God through the blessed Seed, through Christ, wished to give blessing, grace, salvation, and consolation. Therefore, since they understood that Christ would be the treasure by which our sins should be paid, they knew that our works could not pay such a great debt. Therefore they received forgiveness of sin, grace, and salvation without any merit and were saved through faith in the divine promise, the Gospel of Christ, just as the saints in the New Testament." (*Trigl.*, 136 [German text]; comp. also p. 265.) And in another place: "Of this the idle Sophists know little; and the blessed Gospel, which proclaims the forgiveness of sins through the blessed Seed, that is, Christ, has from the beginning of the world been the greatest consolation and treasure to all the pious

kings, all prophets, all believers. For they believed in the same Christ in whom we believe; for from the beginning of the world no saint has been saved in any other way than through faith in the same Gospel. For Peter clearly cites the consensus of the prophets, and the writings of the apostles testify that they believe the same thing." (*Trigl.*, 273.) And again: "For also the patriarchs and saints in the Old Testament became righteous and were reconciled to God through faith in Christ who was to come, through whom salvation and grace was promised, just as we in the New Testament receive grace through faith in Christ who has been made manifest. For from the beginning all believers believed that an offering and payment for sin would be made, namely, Christ, who was promised, as Isaiah (53, 10) says: 'When Thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin.'" (*Trigl.* 402, German text.) Luther teaches exactly the same. He declares: "The forgiveness of sins has been *the same* at all times. Christ is *the same* yesterday and to-day and forever. Therefore they [David and the patriarchs] were saved through faith in Christ, who was to come; but we receive forgiveness of sins and eternal life through faith in the Lord Christ who has already been given unto us, who died for us, and is now sitting in His glory." (St. Louis Ed., V, 553.) And in another place: "[Forgiveness] was purchased once on the cross, but the distribution takes place often, before and afterwards, from the beginning of the world to the end. For since He [Christ] resolved to procure it, it was indifferent to Him whether He, through His Word, distribute it before or afterwards." (St. Louis Ed., XX, 275.) In his sermon on Gen. 3, 14, 15 Luther uses still stronger language: "Here it is written that Adam was a Christian long before the birth of Christ. For he had the same faith in Christ that we have. For in matters of faith, time makes no difference. Faith is of the same nature from the beginning to the end of the world. Therefore he [Adam], through his faith, received the same that I receive. He did not see Christ with his eyes, neither did we, but he had Him in the Word; so we also have Him in the Word. The only difference is this: at that time it *was to come* to pass, now it *has come* to pass. Accordingly all the Fathers were justified in the same manner as we through the Word and through faith, and in this faith they also died." (St. Louis Ed., III, 85.)

Must we cite still more testimonies, for instance, the testimony of Clement of Rome, the pupil of Paul, or of Augustine or of Chemnitz and Gerhard? We could present a long array of wit-

nesses to the reader, and Spener would not even be the last one of them. At the same time we by no means deny the difference between the two Testaments, but we confess on the basis of Col. 2, 16. 17.³⁰⁾ We have the body of Christ; this the Old Testament believers did not have, not to speak of other very considerable advantages of the New Covenant.³¹⁾

Many passages, moreover, testify that the forgiveness which for Christ's sake was dispensed in the Old Covenant was perfect. Or does it sound like fractional forgiveness when Isaiah rejoices: "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for He hath clothed me with the robe of righteousness"? Is. 61, 10. And why does David pray: "Forgive *all* my sins"? Ps. 25, 18. And again: "Deliver me from *all* my transgressions"? Ps. 39, 8. And how can the Korahites pray: "Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of Thy people, Thou hast covered *all* their sin. Thou hast taken away *all* Thy wrath: Thou hast turned Thyself from the fierceness of Thine anger"? Ps. 85, 2. 3. And David: "Bless the Lord, O my soul, . . . who forgiveth *all* thine iniquities"? Ps. 103, 3. And King Hezekiah, speaking of the past: "Behold, for peace I had great bitterness; but Thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption; *for Thou hast cast all my sins behind Thy back*"? Is. 38, 17. And does not Ezekiel say: "If the wicked turn from his sin, . . . *none of his sins that he hath committed shall be mentioned unto him*"? Ezek. 33, 16. And Hosea: "Take with you words and turn to the Lord; say unto Him, Take away *all* iniquity and receive us graciously"? Hos. 14, 2.³²⁾ Is it possible to designate full forgiveness with clearer words? Or if the ever-recurring "all, all, all," according to laws of speech unknown to us, designates an incomplete justification, what terms should the Holy Spirit have used to designate to us a complete justification? Furthermore, these texts are not sufficiently explained by saying that one may possess forgiveness and still be very much in need of it. For if that means that one may in the same moment have and not have forgiveness of sins, then this is clearly false. Here is Hezekiah, who says that absolutely all his sins are forgiven. Now, if some one comes with

30) Not *Χριστός*, but *τοῦ Χριστοῦ*, that means: *τὸ δὲ σῶμα σκιᾶς σῶμα Χριστοῦ*.

31) Catholicity of salvation, much more abundant and more extended outpouring of the Spirit, miracle-working gifts, clearer knowledge of many heavenly things, freedom from the Ceremonial Law.

32) Not to mention Jer. 33, 8; Micah 7, 18—20; Ps. 130, 8.

the assertion that *all* in this place means as much as *not all*, then this is not merely a twisting of words, but is doing open violence to the words of Scripture. If, however, one wishes to say that one may be in possession of full forgiveness and yet, after two hours, be very much in need of it, then this is not only correct, but a necessary complement to the doctrine of full forgiveness. For God's forgiveness does not belong to any one like a house or a gold coin, but like a cloak — you must hold it fast. However, he who is in possession of it at this or any other moment has it entirely — Luther, and St. Paul, and Hezekiah, and Abraham, but no one in a higher degree than the other one.

It is, indeed, peculiar that the very people who assert that affliction is in proportion to sin deny the full forgiveness in the Old Covenant. They say that we have no full forgiveness because we must die, for death is a sign of incomplete forgiveness. And what about Enoch and Elijah? According to these people they possessed much less forgiveness than we. And yet they did not taste of death! Only one of the two propositions can be correct: either affliction is in proportion to wrath, and then Elijah obtained not only full, but superabundant forgiveness, or Elijah possessed a fractional forgiveness, and then the alleged connection between wrath and affliction is broken. I confess that I cannot understand how a person who is imperfectly justified can bodily be taken up in heaven. On a chariot of fire he is carried into the bosom of God, in a glorified form he appears on the Mount of Transfiguration in communion with the Lord, long before the crucifixion of Christ, — and yet he is said not to have had full forgiveness!

Finally, as regards the alleged connection between affliction and chastisement, such connection is present in one sense — through sin death came into the world. Rom. 5, 12. God threatened the first man: "In the day that thou eatest thereof [of the forbidden tree], thou shalt surely die." Gen. 2, 17. He ate, and the wrath of God burst upon him — "thorns and thistles," Gen. 3, 18, "in the sweat of thy face," Gen. 3, 19, "thou shalt return unto the ground, for out of it wast thou taken," Gen. 3, 19. This wrath, however, has been perfectly appeased through the blood of Christ, Rom. 3, 25; John 2, 2; Heb. 2, 17, at least for those who lay hold of this blood by faith, John 3, 36. Therefore all the affliction that God sends upon the believers flows from love. "For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God

dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons." Heb. 12, 3—8. And Titus 2, 11. 12 the apostle says that not the wrath, but the grace of God teacheth [Luther: *zuechtigt*] us. Therefore Scripture carefully distinguishes between punishment³³⁾ and chastening.³⁴⁾ "Therefore it should be diligently impressed upon the minds of the afflicted who are thus chastened that God is *not angry with them* and that they should consider their present visitation a sure sign that God has received them into His grace." (Luther, St. Louis Ed., II, 1466.) However, the purpose of such chastening is not to procure a higher degree of forgiveness for the afflicted, but to keep them in humility. 2 Cor. 12, 7. 9. (Luther. St. Louis Ed., XVI, 7849; II, 1748.)

The only text which seems to conflict with this is 1 Pet. 4, 17: "For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God; and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel of God?" The Greek word which Luther [and the Authorized Version] translates with "judgment" simply means "judgment which has separation for its purpose."³⁵⁾ Now, what does God separate? Of course, sin, from which He himself is far removed. That this judgment operates in different ways is the fault of men. Whoever lets go of his sin when God plucks it out of his hands will be saved; whoever fervently clings to it will be cast into the fire along with it. If you consider sin, then the affliction of the justified is the same as that of the enemies of God — judgment; if, however, you consider the persons who are visited by affliction, then you will find wrath in the case of one and grace in the case of the other. That this is so is shown by death. Death, viewed *per se*, is the wages of sin, but for the person who is visited by death it is neither a sign of justification nor of condemnation. To him who dies in Christ, death is grace, for it removes him out of thousand troubles and brings him into the heavenly fatherland. If, on the other hand, one dies in enmity with God, to him death is an earnest of damnation and a gate to hell. Hence the secure must be told that their affliction is

33) *Τιμωρία*, Heb. 10, 29; *κόλασις*, Matt. 25, 46.

34) *Παιδεία*, 2 Tim. 3, 16 (instruction); Heb. 12, 5. 7. 8. 11 (chastening).

35) *Κρίμα*, from *κρίνω*. This meaning fits in all the 28 texts in which it occurs in Scripture. Of course, the meaning is qualified according to the context. In Matt. 7, 2 and Rev. 20, 4 it is a judicial sentence of separation spoken by men; Rom. 2, 3 and Gal. 5, 10 it is God's own sentence of separation on Judgment Day.

a prelude to the torments of hell; for if they will not let go of sin, God casts them into the lake of fire. On the other hand, the penitent must be told that God indeed hates *sin*, but that He loves *them* and that, therefore, they should patiently submit to the treatment of their faithful Physician, and they will surely be made whole. (Luther. St. Louis Ed., II, 1467 f.) Whoever studies the divine message to the Seven Churches in Asia Minor in the Revelation of John in the light of this doctrine, will not be put to shame. True, God says: "I have somewhat against thee; repent." Rev. 2, 4. 5. 14. 16. This He must say, for also in those who are justified there still is sin. If God does not remove *that*, it will grow and become dominant. Now, when God says: "I have somewhat against thee," He does not mean: You are not yet fully blessed, — for we *are* blessed in Christ, Eph. 1, 6, — but He means: Under the garment of the righteousness of Christ which you are wearing there still is sin. Free yourself from it, else I must free you from it; for sin easily gains the upper hand, and then it will tear your garment. So the words "I have somewhat against thee" prove the imperfection of the righteousness of life and not that of the righteousness of faith.

In no respect whatever is there an immediate relation between affliction and our justification in the sight of God. If by all means you would like to have a connecting medium, let it be this, that God through affliction leads man to repentance, and repentance is the soil of faith. And *in this way* God endeavors to keep us from falling from justification. (Apology. *Trigl.*, 299 f.) So, then, if God sends us affliction, we will penitently submit ourselves to Him; we will let go of all things which are not wholly pleasing to Him. From our afflictions we at all times should be willing to learn to know the imperfection of our righteousness of life; for if no sin adhered to us, God would not chasten us. But we will not permit any one to perforate the garment of the righteousness of Christ which God has given unto us. For among the thousands of imperfect possessions on this earth it is the only perfect one. And on the perfection of this possession all our comfort is based. It was only because Paul could begin his hymn of victory with the words: "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus," Rom. 8, 1, that he could close with the words: "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord." Rom. 8, 38. 39.

Perpetual Forgiveness.

Translated from Dr. E. Preuss's *Die Lehre von der Rechtfertigung*, Part VI.

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It has been said that it is a foolish dream to believe that the full and *final justification* from which good works flow automatically, can be obtained by a single flight of the soul up to God. This is true, at least as far as the final justification is concerned. However, I cannot remember having read the doctrine which is here rejected anywhere except perhaps in Martensen's *Dogmatics*.¹⁾ Now, if the danger which threatens our brethren from this erroneous doctrine is formidable, then help them to get away from it. But am I really helping a wanderer who is in danger of falling over the right side of a bridge if I push him over the left side? Of course, the doctrine of the once-and-never-again justification is dangerous and foolish, just as foolish as if one would maintain that it is sufficient for life to have breathed once, at the time of birth, or that at midnight one can still read by the light of the noon-day sun. And it is also dangerous. For if one is justified once for all on Thursday, one need not be so careful on Friday. He who neglects to strive daily for forgiveness of sins because he relies on the forgiveness which he once received, will indeed have peculiar experiences on his death-bed. But from this it does not by any means follow that justification is at any time incomplete; what, however, does follow is this: we must perpetually apprehend God's full forgiveness by repentance and faith, else it will slip away from us. Just examine the doctrine of Martensen in the light of the example of Abraham. According to Martensen everything that pertains to Abraham's justification, from beginning to end, is contained in Gen. 12, for there the patriarch was converted. All that follows pertains to sanctification. God's Word

1) Martensen, *Dogmatik*. Berlin, 1856. 8vo. — According to Martensen the so-called "great conversion" simply contains justification. After that he knows of nothing else than sanctification. [*"Hans Lassen Martensen*; b. 1808; d. 1884 at Copenhagen as bishop of Zealand, the highest ecclesiastical office of Denmark; prominent Lutheran theologian and dogmatist, with a speculative-mystic tendency."—*Concordia Cyclopaedia*, p. 444.]

judges differently. It takes Abraham, long after his conversion, when he was already renewed and adorned with many good works, and suddenly declares: "He believed in the Lord, and He counted it to him for righteousness." ²⁾ So at the very seat of this doctrine the term *justification* is *not* used of God's first judgment of justification at the time of conversion. This story rather shows that God justifies perpetually. For if God imputed Abraham's faith unto him for righteousness in the middle of his sanctification, then He always did so.

Should any one still be in doubt about this, let him read Rom. 4, 24. There Paul says of himself and of the Romans that the righteousness of Christ *shall be* imputed unto them. He declares that the story of Abraham "was not written for his [Abraham's] sake alone, that it was imputed unto him, but for us also, *to whom it shall be imputed* if we believe on Him that raised up Jesus, our Lord, from the dead." Rom. 4, 23. 24. Philippi pertinently remarks with reference to this text: "Justification is here described as a divine act continuing in time." ³⁾ In the case of Paul it took place for the first time when he was baptized in Damascus, Acts 22, 16; with the Christians at Rome, when they were converted. The matter did not end here, however, but as long as they believed, so long the righteousness of Christ was to be imputed unto them. Is it possible to teach perpetual justification in words clearer than these?

Add to this Rom. 8. There the apostle declares: "There is therefore no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus. . . . It is God that justifieth." ⁴⁾ Because God perpetually justifies, therefore there is no condemnation to us. Yes, Paul reaches into the future and says: "Who *shall* lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth." Neither now nor in the future will any one, not even the devil, be able to lay any charges against us because God *perpetually regards us righteous*. Rom. 4, 6 the apostle does not call the man blessed to whom God *has* imputed righteousness, but the man "unto whom God *imputeth* (*λογίζεται*) righteousness." Of course, there must be a first time when this imputation took place; therefore justification is just as often described also as past. Rom. 5, 1. 9; 1 Cor. 6, 11; Titus

2) Gen. 15, 6; Rom. 4, 3. Formula of Concord. *Trigl.*, 927.

3) Philippi, *Roemerbrief*, 155.

4) Rom. 8, 1: Οὐδὲν ἄρα νῦν κατάκριμα τοῖς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ. The thought is taken up again v. 33: Θεὸς ὁ δικαίων.

3, 7. Besides these passages, however, there are others in which the verb is in the present tense, in order that all may know that the judgment of God pertains not only to the past, but is perpetually present and active. Is. 43, 25. One need but compare Rom. 5, 1 and Gal. 2, 17. Rom. 5, 1 Paul clearly states: "Therefore, *being justified* by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." In Gal. 2, 17 his words are equally clear: "But if we, *while we seek to be justified* by Christ, ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin?" Now, if justification at first were incomplete, then Rom. 5, 1 would not be true; on the other hand, if it had taken place at one time once for all, then Gal. 2, 17 would not be true. So, then, both propositions are wrong; on the contrary, God's justification is at once *complete* and *perpetual*. Therefore St. Paul can properly say in the same epistle that he possesses Christ and that he is striving to win Christ. Phil. 1, 21; 3, 8. 9. And Rom. 5, 17 he says: "They which *receive* abundance of grace and of the gift of [imputed] righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ." He does not say, "which have received," but, "which receive."⁵⁾ For they might have received it and then may lose it again. Therefore he shall reign who perpetually receives the full glory of the imputed righteousness of Christ unto his end. Heb. 4, 16; Rom. 5, 1. 2.

But just which faith is imputed for righteousness, the present or the past faith? If the past faith is imputed, then a man might be a thief and a just man at the same time. If, on the other hand, it is always the present faith which is imputed, then God's justification can certainly not be limited to a minute in your past life. Hence, when the apostle says: "To him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness," Rom. 4, 5, he certainly means: If you believe to-day, then God imputes that faith which you have to-day unto you for righteousness — of course, for the sake of its contents —; if you believe to-morrow, then God imputes the faith which you have to-morrow; if you believe perpetually, then He imputes your perpetual faith continuously. (Compare Acts 10, 43; 13, 39.) And this is perfectly in order. For just as God perpetually imputed the sin of the world unto Christ until His glorious resurrection, so He imputes the righteousness of Christ unto us unto

5) "It is preferable to let it [λαμβάνοντες] keep the participle and present-tense meaning, so that thereby the receiving of grace is designated as continuing in time." (Philippi, *Roemerbrief*, 222.)

our end.⁶⁾ It would be absurd indeed to say that God pronounces a sentence and then is no more concerned about it. God is not a man who, after having pronounced a sentence, folds up his documents and goes home, no matter what the acquitted defendant may do in the mean while; on the contrary, His eyes perpetually rest upon us. So He perpetually estimates you righteous as long as you abide in Him, and He perpetually condemns those who whore against Him; for He is the living, omnipotent God. And just as little as He retired into solitude after the work of creation was finished, but “upholds all things by the word of His power,”⁷⁾ Heb. 1, 3, so that not even a sparrow falls from the roof without His will, just so little does He for a moment turn His eyes, which regard us righteous for Christ’s sake, away from us. For as the preservation of the world is in fact a perpetual creation, so the justification of a poor sinner is a perpetual act of regarding him righteous. We speak of a state of grace, and that is correct. Rom. 5, 2. But this grace wherein we, as the apostle says, stand is not a heap of sand, but a clear, living stream which perpetually flows down upon us from the throne of the Lamb. Rev. 22, 1. Therefore it is said of this grace that it shall reign as a queen through the [imputed] righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ, our Lord. Rom. 5, 21. And just as little as the Rhine would continue to flow for a moment if the living God were to withdraw His hand from it, just so little would the stream of forgiveness flowing from the throne of God refresh our souls if God would cease to send it. In token thereof God has comprehended the stream of forgiveness in the Word and so leads it into our hearts and homes: “Peace I leave unto you, My peace I give unto you.” John 14, 27. “Peace be unto you,” and again: “Peace be unto you.” John 20, 19, 21. And again: “Peace be unto you.” John 20, 26. And through the mouth of the apostle: “Grace to you and peace from God, our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ,” Rom. 1, 7; and again and over and over: 1 Cor. 1, 3; 2 Cor. 1, 2; Gal. 1, 3; Eph. 1, 2; Phil. 1, 2; Col. 1, 2; 1 Thess. 1, 1; 2 Thess. 1, 2; Philemon 3. And once more: “Grace, mercy, and peace from God, our Father, and Jesus Christ, our Lord.” 1 Tim. 1, 2; 2 Tim. 1, 2; Titus 1, 4. There you have perpetual forgiveness if you apprehend it by faith. “O that thou hadst hearkened to My

6) Provided we continue in faith.

7) Luther. St. Louis Ed., I, 61 f.

commandments! Then had thy peace been as a river and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea." Is. 48, 18.

But on what does God's perpetual absolution rest if not on Christ's perpetual intercession? The one requires the other. There is no perpetual forgiveness if the blood of Christ does not perpetually plead for mercy. And Christ's perpetual intercession is perpetually efficacious. Therefore St. Paul exclaims: "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again, *who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.*" Rom. 8, 33. 34. And Heb. 7, 25: "Wherefore He is able to save them to the uttermost [Luther: *immerdar*] that come unto God by Him, seeing He *ever* liveth to make intercession for them." Thus He perpetually stands in the presence of God in His bloody garment. Is it conceivable that His perpetual intercession should not procure perpetual justification and forgiveness? 1 John 2, 1; Heb. 9, 24; 4, 14—16. Most certainly not, as just that is His office; for He is a Priest forever. Ps. 110, 4.⁸⁾

The doctrine of perpetual justification becomes indisputable, however, if we remember that justification and forgiveness are *the same thing*; for Rom. 4, 6—8 the apostle explains the former by the latter,⁹⁾ and on the basis of this apostolic word the Formula of Concord testifies: "The word *justify* means . . . to absolve" (*Trigl.*, 793), and it rejects the attempt to separate them as an error. (*Trigl.*, 795. 937.) And forgiveness, in 1 John 1, 7, is described as perpetual, the words reading: "For the blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, *cleanseth* us from all sins." It *cleanseth* us perpetually because we perpetually have sin. (See also Ps. 103, 3.) And Paul begins Rom. 4, 7 with the words: "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven and whose sins are covered," but then he proceeds, v. 8: "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord

8) Concerning Christ's perpetual intercession see Luther, St. Louis Ed., 941. 1024 f. 1030. — J. B. Carpzov's remarks are very much to the point. He writes: "Uti Christus meritum suum pro nobis praestitit et eodem justificationem nobis acquisivit, ita etiam id ipsum nunc ad dexteram Patris constitutus praesentat Patri ac postulat pro nobis et rogat, ut propterea credentes justificare velit, sicut Rom. VIII, 34; 1 John II, 1; Hebr. VII, 25 id declaratur nobis." (J. B. Carpzov, *Disputationes Isagogicae in Chemnicium*, 1096.)

9) Apostolus justificationem describit per remissionem peccatorum Rom. IV, 7. 8 ex Ps. XXXII, 1; ergo ubi est remissio peccatorum, ibi justificatio. (John Gerhard, *Loci*, III.)

does not impute (λογίζηται) sin." Yes, the Hebrew text which the apostle here has in mind says: "Blessed is he whose transgression is *being taken away*, whose sin is *being covered up*. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord will not impute iniquity." Ps. 32, 1. 2. From this we, of course, do not conclude that David did not receive actual and full forgiveness; for the fifth verse of the same psalm expressly says: "Thou *hast* forgiven me the iniquity of my sin." Ps. 32, 5. This, however, we do maintain most emphatically: When the Holy Spirit here speaks of "blessedness," He does not only mean a forgiveness which David once received, but rather the perpetual forgiveness which he enjoyed. Eph. 1, 6. 7 teaches the same: "He hath made us accepted in the Beloved. In whom we *have* redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins." So, then, we *have* forgiveness of sins; we did not only have it, but we have it perpetually; of course, not within us, but without us, namely, in Christ. And Col. 1, 12. 13 we read: "Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; who hath delivered us from the power of darkness and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son; in whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins." The deliverance from the power of darkness and the translation into the kingdom of Christ took place when we received Holy Baptism, and on the basis of this translation God perpetually forgives our sins. And it is well that it is thus. For a passing forgiveness would benefit us just as little as a mountain stream which is high up in its banks to-day and dried up to-morrow would benefit a boatman.

We are required to believe perpetually; to continue in faith, Acts 14, 22; to live from faith to faith, Rom. 1, 17,¹⁰) as the Apostle Paul did, who confessed concerning himself: "The life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God." Gal. 2, 20. And at the end of his pilgrimage he says: "I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course; I have kept the faith." 2 Tim. 4, 7. To believe is to take. If we believe perpetually, we take perpetually. But how can we take perpetually unless we be given perpetually? So there is a perpetual living relation between our God and us: He gives, and we take; He

10) Respectus habetur ad actum fidei continuatum. Quemadmodum 2 Cor. III, 18 dicimur transformari ex gloria in gloriam, ubi illa ἀναδύλωσις perennitatem et continuitatem significat, ita quoque usurpantur in Scriptura phrases de virtute in virtutem, de saeculo in saeculum. (John Gerhard, *Comm. in Epist. ad Rom.*, 38. 39.) Comp. also Hab. 2, 4.

perpetually gives us the righteousness of Christ, and we perpetually receive it; He perpetually regards us righteous for the sake of His Son, and we perpetually believe. "I believe the forgiveness of sins" does not mean: "I am in possession of it and now take it easy," but: "I take it perpetually." Christ is sitting in the ship; we, the justified not excepted, are not in the ship, but are floundering in the water. Therefore we must cling to the planks of His boat with both hands, yea, if need be, with our teeth, until we safely land in yonder fatherland. This perpetual holding is in every case accompanied by a perpetual turning away from sin. Therefore the Scriptures on every page call to repentance, and Luther is right when he says: "Our Lord and Master Jesus Christ, in saying, 'Repent ye,' etc., intended that the whole life of believers should be penitence."¹¹) Out of such repentance flows faith till death.^{11a}) So, then, these three things are linked together: perpetual forgiveness and perpetual faith and perpetual repentance. None of these is without the other. For how could there be repentance without faith or faith where God does not justify? Rom. 4, 5; Acts 13, 39; 10, 34. And we sorely need these three things because we perpetually have sins. For even the disciple whom Jesus loved confessed: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." 1 John 1, 8. Verily, in our flesh dwelleth no good thing, Rom. 7, 18, and, in addition, we often commit sinful deeds. But if we transgress one commandment, we are guilty of the whole Law. Jas. 2, 10. Therefore, "if Thou, Lord, shouldest mark (חַשְׁבָה) iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with Thee that Thou mayest be feared." Ps. 130, 3. 4. The Hebrew original says "the forgiveness" (הַסְלִיחָה), not "a forgiveness." It is perpetual forgiveness because we perpetually have sins. Woe unto us if God would but for a moment cease to regard us righteous for the sake of the blood of Christ! (Luther. St. Louis Ed., IV, 2045.) But just as at the first time, even so perpetually God's justification comes through the Word. Therefore the Lord does not say: "If a man once receives My sayings, He shall never see death," but: "If

11) Dominus et magister noster Jesus Christus dicendo: Poenitentiam agite! omnem vitam fidelium poenitentiam esse voluit. (Luther's Ninety-five Theses, Thesis I.) [For English translation of the Ninety-five Theses see *Concordia Cyclopaedia*, p. 756 ff.] — The same doctrine is taught in the Apology, *Trigl.*, 213, and in the Smalcald Articles, *Trigl.*, 488.

11a) What the author means to say is that repentance and faith cannot be separated. In fact, how could it be otherwise, since faith is a part of repentance. — Ed.

a man *keep* My sayings." John 8, 51. And Paul exhorts his Philippians to hold the Word of life with both hands.¹²⁾ Phil. 2, 16. James even admonishes us perpetually to receive the engrafted Word.¹³⁾ Jas. 1, 21.

From the viewpoint of this doctrine one understands also Ps. 51. Upon his penitent confession God had forgiven David through the mouth of Nathan. 2 Sam. 12, 13. Nevertheless David trembles and cries: "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Thy loving-kindness: according to the multitude of Thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Deliver me from bloodguiltiness." Ps. 51, 1. 2. 7. 14. For a terrified conscience the point is always *present* forgiveness. Though God forgave you a thousand times in the past, He must forgive you *now*; though you believed a thousand times in the past, you must perpetually believe if you are to have peace of conscience. And that is a very grievous sin, taking another man's wife and becoming his murderer.¹⁴⁾ 2 Sam. 12, 9; Ps. 51, 14. Thus God forgave David, and forgave him perpetually, especially in response to his plaintive prayer. Ps. 32.

Our God calls Himself "Sun of Righteousness." Mal. 4, 2. When the sun rises, it causes the trees to glisten in brilliant green; but the colors fade away when the sun sets. So it is not enough that the brightness of the righteousness of Christ was once spread over you; God must perpetually shed its rays upon you, else your glory will depart as the colors outdoors fade away when night comes on. Num. 6, 25. Sun of Righteousness, shed Thy rays perpetually upon us, for Thy light is our light.

This is also the doctrine of the Fathers. When the Augsburg Confession says that we *are* justified before God if we believe and that God imputes this faith unto us for righteousness in His

12) *Ἐπέχοντες*, not *ἔχοντες*. Hence, *τὸν νοῦν* or *τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς ἐπέχειν* steadfastly to keep the mind or the eyes fixed upon something.

13) James calls the Gospel a *λόγον ἔμφυτον* in so far as it was no longer strange to the hearts of his readers, but engrafted into them. And the verb *δέξασθε* in no way conflicts with this, because the Word through which the new birth was wrought in the Christians is always proclaimed to them anew and must always be received by them anew.

14) Ps. 51, 14 [Hebrew text v. 16] proves that David did not ask for a more complete forgiveness. For a single sin can certainly not be forgiven half. However, concerning this one sin (דָּמָה) two things are certain; first, that it was already forgiven through Nathan; secondly, that David afterwards still asked that it be forgiven.

sight,¹⁵) it does not speak of a justification which took place in Holy Baptism or in conversion, but of a continuous act of God. Also Carpzov understands the Augsburg Confession thus. In his famous *Introduction to the Confessional Writings of the Lutheran Church* he says: "The Protestants are here" — in Article IV of the Augsburg Confession — "speaking of justification as it takes place and is continued, namely, as it takes place and is continued as far as it is solely by faith."¹⁶) The Apology teaches the same when it says: "Sin is remitted in Baptism, not in such a manner that it no longer exists, but so that *it is not imputed.*" (*Trigl.*, 115.) And again: "They," (*i. e.*, the passages quoted), "clearly call concupiscence sin, which, however, is not imputed to those who are in Christ, although by nature it is a matter worthy of death, where it is not forgiven."¹⁷) So, then, sin remains in us. How long? As long as we live. But it is not imputed unto us. How long? As long as we live. Is this perpetual forgiveness, or is it not? (See Smalcald Articles. *Trigl.*, 499.) Also the Small Catechism joins in this testimony when it says: "I believe the forgiveness of sins." What does this mean? It does not mean: "I believe that certain sins are under certain circumstances forgiven to certain people"; nor does it mean that at some previous time, at my first conversion, all my sins were forgiven to me, but it means, — however, why trouble myself with trying to say what it means since the Catechism itself explains the words by saying: "In which Christian Church *He forgives daily and richly all sins* to me and all believers"? (*Trigl.*, 545. See also Large Catechism, *Trigl.*, 693.) That is what it means. And the Formula of Concord, following the Apology, teaches: "Christ covers all their sins, which nevertheless in this life still adhere in nature, with His complete obedience. But irrespective of this they are declared and regarded godly and righteous by faith and for the sake of Christ's obedience . . . , although on account of their corrupt nature they

15) *Gratis justificantur propter Christum per fidem, quum credunt se in gratiam recipi et peccata remitti propter Christum, qui sua morte pro nostris peccatis satisfecit. Hanc fidem imputat Deus pro justitia coram ipso, Rom. 3 et 4. (Trigl., 45.)*

16) *Loquuntur Protestantes de justificatione, prout illa fit et continuatur . . . , prout enim fit ac continuatur, eatenus ex sola fide est. (John B. Carpzov, Isagoge in Libros Eccl. Luth. Symbolicos, 202.)*

17) *Haec testimonia nulla cavillatione everti possunt. Clare enim appellant concupiscentiam peccatum, quod tamen his, qui sunt in Christo, non imputatur, etsi res sit natura digna morte, ubi non condonatur. (Trigl., 115.)*

still are and remain sinners to the grave." (*Trigl.*, 923. See also p. 927.) How does the doctrine that God justifies us only once in our life agree with this?

And as regards the theologians, with whom shall we begin? With Clement of Rome?¹⁸⁾ or Augustine? or Luther? Luther says: "Therefore it is the same righteousness which is given unto men in Baptism and at all times in true repentance." (St. Louis Ed., X, 1264.) And in another place: "Since sin eternally inheres in our flesh as long as we live on this earth, and since we never cease to sin and err, we must verily also have an eternal and perpetual forgiveness." (St. Louis Ed., V, 1094. Also XI, 719. 584; XVI, 1194 f.) Martin Chemnitz has the same clear conception of the matter. If a person wishes to be completely cured of the erroneous doctrine of Martensen, he need only read that part of Chemnitz's *Examen* which treats of justification; for by justification he always understands God's perpetual judicial act of regarding the sinner righteous, and nothing else. We really ought to quote the entire article, which covers fifty-three quarto pages. But that being out of the question, we choose half a dozen passages at random, no matter which: "God does not give us the benefit of justification only once in this life, namely, when we are baptized."¹⁹⁾ Again: "The papists limit justification to a single moment, when a sinner is at first made righteous. It is obvious that this opinion is in direct conflict with the Holy Scriptures; for when they teach that we become righteous by grace, for Christ's sake, without works, they are not only speaking of the first conversion. The justification which the Scriptures teach is not a justification which takes place once and then is done."²⁰⁾ — Then follows the example of Abraham and the proof from Ps. 32. And further on: "Habakkuk does not only say: 'The just lives by

18) Clemens Romanus. *Ep. ad Cor. I, 32*: *Δικαιοῦμεθα διὰ τῆς πίστεως*. Present tense, and yet he had been baptized long ago.

19) Neque etiam semel tantum in hac vita, quando scilicet baptizamus, Deus nobis offert, communicat et applicat beneficium justificationis. (*Examen*, 184, B.)

20) Restrungunt ad unicum momentum, quando homo primum ex impio fit justus, ut in uno tantum et primo illo momento primae conversionis gratis propter Christum sine operibus justificemur, postea vero per totam vitam justificemur propter nostra opera. Quod autem haec opinio adversa quasi fronte pugnet cum Scripturae sententia, non est obscurum. Neque enim de principio tantum conversionis loquitur Scriptura, quando tradit, nos gratia, propter Christum, sine operibus justificari coram Deo ad vitam aeternam; ut illa justificatio unius tantum momenti sit. (*L. c.*, 175, A.)

faith,' but: 'He *shall* live by faith.' So, then, it is one and the same justification which we receive when we are at first converted and by which we finally enter into eternal life."²¹) "Not even in the regenerate does God find perfect righteousness; on the contrary, many and various sins. So God regards them righteous freely and by grace if they acknowledge their sin and by faith apprehend mercy in Christ."²²) We see that the soul of Chemnitz knew nothing of this curious order of salvation: to-day justification, to-morrow sanctification; he rather teaches that God regards also the most advanced Christians righteous *perpetually* and by grace, for Christ's sake.

Also Flacius faithfully stands by the others in this matter. The godly, he says, are *perpetually justified* through faith. Paul treats of this perpetual justification Rom. 8: "It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth?" For this *perpetual justification* we ask in the Lord's Prayer²³) And elsewhere: "Justification does not take place only once or seldom, but continuously. For this *perpetual justification* we beg [*erbetteln*] at all times in the Lord's Prayer, for Christ's sake."²⁴) And Aegidius Hunnius writes: Was not Abraham justified already before Gen. 15? Most certainly. For he obeyed God by faith when he was called out of Chaldea. Heb. 11, 8. Why, then, is it suddenly said of him that

21) Habakuk non tantum dicit: Justus ex fide vivit, sed ζήσται, vivet; una igitur et eadem justificatio et in principio conversionis et qua tandem pervenimus ad vitam aeternam. (*L. c.*, 175, A.)

22) Judicium Dei non invenit in nobis in hac vita, ne in renatis quidem, talem tam perfectam et tam puram justitiam inhaerentem, qua ita possimus coram Deo consistere, ut propter illam justificemur ad vitam aeternam. Secundo invenit autem in nobis, etiam in sanctis, in hac vita multa et varia peccata, imo ipsum peccatum habitans in carne, rebellans legi mentis etc. . . . Quarto ibi vero Deus gratis per suam gratiam justificat, hoc est, a sententia damnationis absolvit, justos reputat illos, qui peccata sua agnoscunt et confitentur et fide promissionem misericordiae in Christo propositam apprehendunt. (*L. c.*, 157, B. 158, A.)

23) Pii perpetuo per fidem justificantur, hoc est, a peccatis absolvuntur, nempe quoties remissionem peccatorum petunt et accipiunt. De qua assidua justificatione inquit Paulus Rom. VIII: "Deus est, qui justificat; quis est, qui condemnet?" Hanc perpetuam justificationem assidue petimus in Dominica Oratione, ubi etiam impetramus, ut perpetuo nobis fides ad justitiam imputetur. (M. Flacius, *Nōv. Test. cum Glossa*, 1210, B.)

24) Nec semel tantum aut raro illa justificatio peragitur, sed subinde. . . . Illam perpetuam justificationem nos per mediatorem nostrum fidei preceatione omnibus horis mendicare, jussit Filius Dei, dicendo: "Remitte nobis debita nostra." (M. Flacius, *Clavis Scripturae*, 576.)

God justified him? Was his justification perhaps made more complete? No; for the justification of a sinner in the sight of God knows no plus and no minus. The reason is this: as the forgiveness takes place and is renewed day by day because we daily sin much, so also justification. For justifying faith is imputed unto us for righteousness not only in the first moment of our reconciliation to God, but *perpetually*.²⁵⁾ Almost the identical words are used by John Gerhard, who writes: "As the forgiveness of sins, so also our justification is renewed from day to day, and faith is imputed for righteousness to him that believeth not only in the beginning, but daily."²⁶⁾ And in another place: "Through faith in Christ we receive forgiveness of sins. However, justifying faith apprehends the forgiveness which is offered in the Gospel, not as past, but as always present, and in that way makes it its own."²⁷⁾ And Henry Hoepfner writes: "We speak of our justification not only as regards the time when first all our sins were forgiven for Christ's sake, but also as regards the remainder of

25) An non Abraham justificatus fuit, prius Dominus illi diceret: "Sic erit semen tuum"? Omnino. Nam statim quum ex Ur Chaldaeorum evocaretur, fide obedivit vocanti Deo, Hebr. IX, 8. Ergo fidem justificantem habuit et ex illa quam plurima bona opera hucusque fecit. Quomodo igitur demum justificatus scribitur hoc XV. capite? Num forte justificatio in ipso incrementa sumpsit, ut ratione ejus augmenti haec a Mose scribantur? Justificatio hominis coram Deo non recipit magis aut minus, quia non consideratur respectu operum, virtutum et donorum in nobis, . . . sed spectatur in ea Dei reconciliati gratia, meritum Christi, fides. . . . Quod autem Abrahamo, prius etiam justificato, nunc fides ejus in promissionem novam imputari dicitur ad justitiam, sciendum est, sicut remissio peccatorum, in qua consistit justificatio, fit et renovatur in dies, siquidem quotidie peccamus etiam justificati, unde oramus quoque in dies: "Remitte nobis debita nostra," sic et justificationem nostram non quidem augeri in dies, in dies tamen innovari. Nam fides justificans non tantum in primo momento nostrae cum Deo reconciliationis imputatur nobis ad justitiam, sed semper et quotidie, praesertim quando justificam illam ἐνέργειαν, nempe fidem intuitum in promissionem de Christo, actu exserit; sicut Abraham faciebat, quum audiret: "Sic erit semen tuum"; ubi Dominus fidem ejus, qua et prius erat justificatus, jam quoque illi ad justitiam imputare pergit. (Aegidius Hunnius, *Opera*, III, 1548 sq.)

26) Ut remissio peccatorum, ita quoque justificatio nostra renovatur in dies, ac fides non tantum in primo initio, sed quotidie imputatur credenti ad justitiam. (John Gerhard, *Loci*, III, 396.)

27) Credendo in Christo accipimus remissionem peccatorum. . . . Fides igitur justificans respicit peccatorum remissionem in verbo evangelii oblatam, non ut praeteritam, sed ut praesentem, eamque apprehendendo facit suam. (John Gerhard, *l. c.*, 424, B.)

our lives, in which God continues our justification.”²⁸⁾ “For although our justification before God has neither grades nor degrees, it is, nevertheless, continued. This follows from the very nature of forgiveness, which does not abolish sin, but covers it. Even the example of Abraham shows this, for he was made righteous through faith in his Savior, not only in his conversion, but also afterwards.”²⁹⁾ Also Quenstedt teaches the same when, following Aegidius Hunnius and Gerhard, he writes: “As the forgiveness, so also our justification is renewed day by day, and faith is imputed for righteousness to the believer not only in the beginning, but daily. In this way our justification is continued.”³⁰⁾ Luetkens,³¹⁾ going more into detail, says: “We obtain forgiveness of sins through faith, without any assistance on the part of good works, not only in the first beginning of justification which is bestowed upon us, but justification is also continued in the same manner. When the grace of God is given to us through faith for forgiveness of sins, we must not hold that now its divine activity in our behalf ceases; but as long as we keep the grace of God by faith, so long our justification flows continuously from grace which perpetually shines over us. This must not be understood as though he who is justified should or could in this grace obtain a higher or more perfect degree of forgiveness. However, as regards the

28) Consideratur justificatio nostri non tantum circa primum statum reparationis, quando per fidem in Christum omnia peccata antecedentia remittuntur, 1 Tim. I, 15. 16, sed etiam circa reliquae vitae Christianae tractum, dum justificationem Deus vel continuat. (H. Hoepfner, *De Justificatione*, p. 55.)

29) Quamvis enim justificatio coram Deo non recipiat gradus et incrementa, ita ut quis possit justior fieri justitia imputata, tamen recte dicitur continuari. . . . Patet hoc ex natura divinae remissionis peccatorum, quae peccatum quoad existentiam non tollit, sed illud tegit et non imputat, ita ut per alienam, nempe Christi, justitiam homo fidelis sit justus, licet in se habeat peccati reliquias, nec ipsi inhaeret perfecta justitia, quum lex semper inveniat in illo, quod damnare possit, si secundum justitiam inhaerentem judicari deberet. Exemplo est Abrahamus jam multo ante conversus, qui tamen postea non alio modo justus est apud Deum quam fide in Messiam. Rom. IV, 13. (H. Hoepfner, *Disputationes Theologicae*, p. 424 sq.)

30) Ut remissio peccatorum, ita quoque justificatio nostra renovatur in dies, et fides non tantum in primo initio, sed quotidie imputatur credenti ad justitiam, atque ita justificatio nostra continuatur. (Quenstedt, *Theol. Didact.-polem.*, III, p. 527.)

31) Franz Julius Luetkens; died 1712 as professor of theology and court preacher in Copenhagen. His chief writings are: *Collegium Biblicum* and the tract *On the Usefulness of Private Confession*.

time he who is justified by faith can still be made righteous or his justification, or forgiveness of sins, can be continued and is continued.”³²) Fresenius, becoming still more explicit, writes: “*Justification continues throughout the whole life*, provided that a man remains in the state of grace. The meaning of this proposition is that justification continues without interruption as it took place in the beginning. For there can be no state of grace without perpetual justification, for the following reasons: He that is justified carries the root of sin in his bosom as long as he lives, neither can he, though he be ever so careful and cautious, ever succeed in reaching the point where he will be without sins of infirmity which, of course, are also truly sins. But where there is sin, there is also guilt. If, therefore, sin, which perpetually adheres to believers, is not to harm them, they must perpetually be absolved of them. And furthermore, faith is not a thing which is alternately present and not present in man, which now comes to him and then vanishes again, but it is something persistent and perpetual, as long as man does not maliciously reject it. But where there is faith, there is also justification; and justification continues as long as faith is present. Faith is the perpetual principle of life (*Lebensprinzip*) in the heart. It is, however, not in this quality that it manifests its first and chief power, but its chief function is the apprehension of the righteousness of Christ. Hence justification is necessary throughout the believer’s whole life, for faith is continuously necessary. And it actually does take place perpetually because faith is indeed perpetually present in the soul which is blessed. Paul calls this ‘continuing in His [God’s] goodness’ when one by faith perpetually clings to God’s goodness as to true goodness and grace, just as one apprehended it the first time. Rom. 11, 22. Justification, however, is continued in respect to all its component parts, so that the merit of Christ is perpetually imputed to the believer, his sins perpetually forgiven, and the title to all graces and treasures of salvation perpetually conveyed to him. Whoever is in Christ by faith perpetually lays all his sins at His feet, and His entire merit is imputed unto him. The penitent acknowledgment and perception of individual sins is necessary in order that, having come to a deeper conviction concerning the entire cause of perdition, one may be made more desirous of grace and more circumspect in one’s conversation. So, then, the fact remains that justification continues throughout the believer’s entire life, that the merit of Christ is at all times imputed unto him, that all sins,

32) Franz Julius Luetkens, *Collegium Biblicum*, p. 533 sq.

also those which he does not expressly know, Ps. 19, 12, are forgiven and all treasures of salvation perpetually conveyed to him, and that therefore he is perpetually prepared to die a blessed death. *From this we also see that, as regards man, there is indeed a state of justification, but as regards God, it is rather a continuous, constant, and ever uniform act of justification throughout the Christian's whole life.*"³³⁾ F. H. R. Frank, in his *Theology of the Formula of Concord*, speaks in the same strain: "The consciousness of the believer comforts itself with the knowledge that he obtained, and continuously obtains, his full and complete justification in Him who of God is made unto him Righteousness. 1 Cor. 1, 30."³⁴⁾ All these men, and with them many others, clearly confess God's perpetual forgiveness.

True, it has been noted that there is a difference between the first forgiveness and perpetual forgiveness. This we admit, just as there is a difference between the first breath of a new-born child and its breathing after that. And furthermore, with justification as it takes place for the first time other things are connected. It is, however, important to see clearly wherein this difference consists and wherein it does not consist, lest the foolish talk gain ground in our midst that a person is justified but once in his life and that after that there is nothing but sanctification. The first and foremost difference concerns the person who is justified. At the time of the first justification he is an enemy of God, who is under the power of darkness and in the bondage of sin; afterwards he is merely a sinner, for also the greatest saints remain sinners to the grave. From this follows the second difference: the first justification translates from the state of wrath into the state of grace, from guilt into favor; perpetual justification keeps one in favor. The third difference is this: the first forgiveness which one obtains coincides with regeneration; perpetual forgiveness does not. On the other hand, the difference does *not* consist in the nature of the divine operation; it is the same act by virtue of which God regards Saul at Damascus and Paul at Philippi righteous. Nor should one say that the first act of God is called justification and the second simply forgiveness; for justification and forgiveness are one and the same thing. For when Paul calls the man blessed "unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works," he, in order to prove this statement, appeals to the word of the psalmist: "Blessed are they whose . . . sins are covered." Rom. 4, 6. 7. So Paul understands what David says of forgiveness as referring to

33) Fresenius, *Rechtfertigung*, p. 569—573; comp. also p. 545.

34) *Die Theologie der Konkordienformel*, II, p. 192.

justification. And Acts 13, 38, 39 he declares: "Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by Him all that believe are justified from all things from which ye could not be justified by the Law of Moses." Here, too, forgiveness of sins is nothing else than justification. Paul says, Rom. 5, 9, that we are *justified* by the blood of Christ. St. John expresses this truth in the words: "The blood of Jesus Christ *cleanseth us from all sin.*" 1 John 1, 7. So justification and forgiveness are the same thing.

If one nevertheless wishes to call only the very first forgiveness which one obtains justification, then he must at least limit this term to Baptism. For in Baptism we were delivered from the power of darkness and were translated into the kingdom of Christ; in it we were washed, sanctified, justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God. Col. 1, 13; 1 Cor. 6, 11. It would, however, be altogether senseless and contrary to the Scriptures to call only that forgiveness which one obtained at any time after severe inner conflicts absolute justification. This amounts to a denial of the power of Baptism and at the same time creates the foolish delusion that henceforth justification need not be continued, but that only sanctification is necessary. When the Word of God speaks of persons who are justified, it does not mean people who at some time in their life obtained forgiveness and thereafter served the flesh, but it means believers, *i. e.*, persons who first were translated from the state of wrath into the state of grace, but to whom since then their perpetual faith, born of repentance, is perpetually imputed for righteousness. Therefore we say with Hollaz: "We distinguish between first and continued justification. The first justification is the act of grace by which God for the first time completely absolves the sinner who is guilty of eternal death in view of the merit of Christ, which he apprehends by faith, of all sins and all their punishments. Continued justification, however, is the act of grace by which God perpetually regards as righteous the penitent sinner who in true faith perpetually asks for forgiveness."³⁵)

This, then, is the course of our pilgrimage: In Holy Baptism

35) Quomodo distinguitur justificatio? Justificatio distinguitur in primam et continuatam. Illa est actus gratiae, quo Deus peccatorem reum aeternae mortis, sed conversum et renatum, intuitu meriti Christi vera fide apprehensi a peccatis eorumque poenis primum absolvit et gratiosa aestimatione justum reputat. Haec est actus gratiae, quo Deus hominem, poenitentem et vera in Christum fide jugiter remissionem peccatorum expetentem, in statu justitiae conservat. (Hollaz, *Examen*, p. 379.)

all our sins are forgiven;³⁶⁾ if we continue in His goodness, God continuously sees us wholly pure in the blood of His Son and is unto us “a tabernacle for a shadow in the daytime from the heat and a place for a refuge and a covert from storm and rain.” Is. 4, 6. His perpetual justification, however, flows from the fountain of the first justification in Baptism³⁷⁾ So we never possess our righteousness in *ourselves*, but always in Him. For in us there is nothing but sin, unrighteousness, and foolishness. Therefore we unceasingly rend our hearts, Joel 2, 13, and perpetually plead for mercy³⁸⁾ And as surely as our sin is ever before us, Ps. 51, 3, just so surely the righteousness of Christ is ever over us, and before it would wither or lose its power, the Danube would flow back into its source. In this matter we do not trust in the faith which we had or in the forgiveness which we obtained in the past, Ezek. 33, 13, else we should be like people who attempt to preserve the sunlight in bags; but we always trust in the ever-present blood of Christ, which perpetually cries for mercy. This blood we continuously present to the Father in perpetual repentance. Therefore we do not consider it to be too much if we receive forgiveness of sins early Sunday mornings in the confessional service and again, half an hour later, in the main service, after the confession of sins, and once more at twelve o'clock in Holy Communion. Yes, we would not consider it to be too often if we received forgiveness of sins twenty times every hour.³⁹⁾ I ask, not the sticklers for pre-

36) Eos etiam, qui dicunt, inquit, baptisma non omnia peccata delere, condemnamus; quia scimus plenam purgationem per ipsa mysteria conferri. Hoc dicimus et nos; sed parvulos quoque per ipsa mysteria primae nativitatis et obnoxiae successionis vinculis solvi, non dicitis vos. Propter quod de ecclesia Christi, quae hoc antiquitus tenet, oportet, ut sicut alii haeretici segregemini et vos. (Augustine, *Contra Duas Epistolas Pelagianorum*, I, 41.)

37) Luther. St. Louis Ed., XII, p. 1143.

38) *Appendix ad Cat. Maj. Brevis Admonitio ad Confessionem.* Book of Concord. Mueller's Ed., p. 774.

39) Est autem hoc etiam expendendum: An haec justificatio tantum semel sit quaerenda; aut: an sufficiat, si quis post gravem lapsum eam quaerat, sicut David post commissum adulterium et homicidium jacuit coram arca et flebiliter reconciliationem cum Deo quaesivit. Nequaquam, sed est talis doctrina, quae quotidie in praxi est exercenda. Uti enim panis quotidianus resumendus est, ita etiam, quia justus in die septies cadit, Prov. XXIV, 16, quotidie iteranda est illa petitio: Dimitte nobis debita nostra, atque per eam justificatio quaerenda. . . . Et licet ubivis orare, Joh. IV, 23, etiam domi in cubiculo, Matth. VI, 6; tamen singuli precum domi mane et vespri non debent oblivisci. Sed quia verendum est, multos, sive simpliciores, sive crassiores, illud negligere, prodest, ut singulis diebus Solis in ecclesia conveniamus, ibi ex auditu verbi divini hanc doctrinam primum repetamus, postea addita peccatorum confessione et audita absolutione eandem exerceamus. Et hoc stadium decurrere debet Christianus, quamdiu in hoc mundo vivit, donec vitam aeternam apprehendat. (Pol. Leyser, in *Harmonia Evangelica*, I, 1791 f.)

scribed forms, if there are such, but the aged women in the closet, Is this true or not? This doctrine, the doctrine of perpetual forgiveness, and none other, protects against [carnal] security. For he who regards justification merely as a stepping-stone to sanctification can easily come to the viewpoint of the clergyman in Pomerania who was given to strong drink. He held that the grace of justification, but not the grace of sanctification had been bestowed upon him. On the other hand, he who thinks that he can protect himself from security with the doctrine of gradual forgiveness is not much different from the monks who grievously tortured themselves and yet never found peace.

But suppose the life of the Christian does not run its course according to this rule? Suppose he falls into unchastity and murder? Does God's perpetual grace cover such sins too? Never! For there is a mighty chasm between mortal sins and venial sins. Of course, in itself no sin is trivial or venial; on the contrary, all sins are damnable. But in so far as some sins, for example, evil lust or sinful thoughts, do not destroy justifying faith, God does not impute them to us, but graciously covers them. On the other hand, sins against the conscience destroy faith and cast us out of the very middle of the stream of forgiveness into the desert of damnation.⁴⁰ The Scriptures know of such cases and describe them in terms that are by no means mild. 2 Pet. 2, 20—22 we read: "For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein and overcome, the latter end is worse with them

40) In hunc usum veteres et necessarium discrimen inter peccatum veniale seu non regnans et inter mortale seu regnans peccatum tradiderunt; non hoc sensu, quasi quaedam contra legem Dei peccata essent tam levicula peccatilla seu viciola, ut pro illis nos ipsi iudicio Dei satisfacere possemus, sed hoc voluerunt distinctione illa peccati mortalis et venialis indicare: quod in conversis (de illis enim accipienda est haec distinctio, quum in non renatis omnia peccata sint mortalia) quaedam sint peccata, per quae nec poenitentia nec fides nec Spiritus Sanctus excutitur, atque ita nec iustitia nec salus amittitur, sed retinetur bona conscientia, quae certa est, se Deum habere propitium. Tale peccatum est originalis depravatio habitans in carne, unde pullulant cogitationes et concupiscentiae, illicientes et sollicitantes nos ad vitia. Quando vero pravis illis concupiscentiis per Spiritum repugnamus, actiones carnis mortificamus, nec eas regnare permittimus, ut perficiantur, sed fide petimus sordes illas tegi et non imputari, tunc retinemus iustitiam et salutem. Ratio vero est, quia tunc manet in nobis poenitentia, hoc est, detestatio peccati, manet etiam fides quarens, apprehendens et retinens Christum. Sed quando renati pravam illam radicem peccati in carne non curant, non repugnant, sed delectantur concupiscentiis carnis, [et] captant occasiones, ut perficiantur; tales certum est rursus lapsos esse et nec iustitiam nec salutem habere. (*Repetitio Corporis Doctrinae Ecclesiasticae*, pp. 117—119.)

than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it happened unto them according to a true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire." Such people as depart from the living God, Heb. 3, 12, are fallen from grace, Gal. 5, 4, and all their righteousness that they have done shall not be mentioned, Ezek. 18, 24. Now, if they do not wish to be cast into hell, they must be converted again;⁴¹⁾ they must "buy gold tried in the fire and white raiment that they may be clothed";⁴²⁾ that is, they must come with weeping and with supplications, Jer. 31, 9, and God will have mercy on them again for the sake of the covenant which He made with them in Holy Baptism.⁴³⁾ So, whether you from the beginning remained steadfast in baptismal grace, or whether you found your Savior after grievous falls, hold fast to Him in the Word; for there He perpetually justifies you, provided you believe perpetually.

41) "But when the baptized have acted against their conscience, allowed sin to rule in them, and thus have grieved and lost the Holy Ghost in them, they need not be rebaptized, but must be converted again." (Formula of Concord. *Conc. Trigl.*, 907.)

42) Rev. 3, 18. *Χρυσίον*, fidem. Suadeo tibi, ut veram Dei cognitionem et fidem per veram poenitentiam et preces a me tibi compares, ut dives fias. *Ἰμάτια λευκά* sunt *δικαιώματα*, justitia Christi, quae per fidem credentibus imputatur. (John Gerhard, *Commentarius in Rev.*, p. 28.)

43) Luke 15, especially vv. 11—24. Compare also 1 Pet. 3, 21. Petrus post baptismum perceptum in gravissimum abnegationis peccatum erat prolapsus, nihilo tamen minus consolationem ac certitudinem salutis suae petit ex baptismo. (John Gerhard, *Commentarius*, p. 21.)

Sure Grace.

Translated from Dr. E. Preuss's *Die Lehre von der Rechtfertigung*, Part VII.

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Here is sure grace. Is. 55, 3. Not in the doctrine of gradual forgiveness. For what guarantee have I that the little grain of forgiveness which happens to be in my possession at this time is really sufficient for my salvation? Not in the doctrine of a justification through a heavenly voice which comes but once in a lifetime. For the remembrance of the voice heard at that time is effaced by time; and even if time would spare it, what good would that do you? It would no more assure you of your being in a state of grace than the certainty of your birthday gives you the assurance that you are alive now. The assurance of your salvation rather rests on the fact that you are a sinner, but that the blood of Christ which perpetually makes intercession for you is standing between the fierce wrath of Almighty God and you. And as you have the certainty of life in every breath which you take and by means of which you drink the life-sustaining air, so you have sure forgiveness in every grasp of your faith by which you apprehend Christ.

True. But does this also give me the assurance that I will *finally* be saved? Most certainly! For God "spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all; how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" Rom. 8, 32. And furthermore, God's Word says: "Fear not; for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art Mine." Is. 43, 1. And: "For the mountains shall depart and the hills be removed, but My kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of My peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee." Is. 54, 10. "O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colors and lay thy foundation with sapphires. And I will make thy windows of agates and thy gates of carbuncles and all thy borders of pleasant stones." Is. 54, 11, 12.

Men are liars; but "God is not a man that He should lie, neither the son of man that He should repent. Hath He said,

and shall He not do it, or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?" Num. 23, 19. No, "for the Word of the Lord is right, and all His works are done in truth." Ps. 63, 4; 19, 7; Jer. 42, 5; Titus 1, 9; Rev. 21, 5. Yes, He has even sworn: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep My saying, he shall never see death." John 8, 51. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My Word and believeth on Him that sent Me hath everlasting life and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life." John 5, 24. "Men, verily, swear by the greater; and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things in which it was impossible for God to lie we might have a strong consolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us; which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the Forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an High Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec." Heb. 6, 16—20. And is God not mighty enough to keep His promise? Is He not greater than our heart, yea, greater than all? 1 John 3, 20. "I give unto them eternal life," says Christ, "and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand. My Father, which gave them Me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of My Father's hand." John 10, 28, 29. On this rock stands the house of our salvation. And did He not give us the holy Sacraments: Baptism, Gal. 3, 27, Absolution,¹⁾ Matt. 18, 18; John 20, 23, and the Holy Supper, as His seals?²⁾ What is the purpose of the seal on the letter? To protect it against unauthorized intruders and to confirm its authenticity. So the Sacraments protect us against doubt and testify unto us the true and perpetual grace. And is not the Holy Spirit "the earnest of our inheritance"? Eph. 1, 14; 2 Cor. 1, 22. For we "have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but we have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God; and if children, then heirs; heirs of God and

1) Apology. *Trigl.*, 261 f. 309; Large Catechism. *Trigl.*, 751. [In strict parlance absolution would not be classed as a Sacrament. — ED.]

2) As He gave circumcision to Abraham. Rom. 4, 11.

joint heirs with Christ." Rom. 8, 15—17. And in spite of this we should still doubt? Is not the Holy Spirit "the Spirit of Truth," John 15, 26, yes, Truth itself? 1 John 5, 6. "If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater." 1 John 5, 9—11. Furthermore, we know that every prayer which is offered up in the name of Jesus is heard, John 16, 23; 1 John 5, 14, 15, therefore especially the prayer, "Forgive!" and, "Lead us not into temptation," and, "Deliver us from evil." Matt. 6, 9, 12, 13. Yes, faith, from which such prayers flow, is nothing else than "the substance ³⁾ (ὁψοστας) of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Heb. 11, 1. Therefore we say confidently with St. Paul: "I am persuaded (πέπεισμαι) that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord." Rom. 8, 38, 39.

But is it not written: "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall," 1 Cor. 10, 12; and: "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling," Phil. 2, 12; and: "Thou standest by faith. Be not high-minded, but fear," Rom. 11, 20; and: "Pass the time of your sojourn here in fear," 1 Pet. 1, 17; and: "Happy is the man that feareth alway," Prov. 28, 14? Do such admonitions not clearly conflict with the assurance of grace? Foolish thought! Who is to fear? Why, the old man is to fear; and just he is the fiercest enemy of perpetual and sure forgiveness. Therefore God's Word chastises him, not in order to *diminish* the assurance of grace, but to *strengthen* it. If anything is to be diminished, it is our carnal sense of *security*. Security and assurance agree like fire and water: the more security, the less assurance, and *vice versa*. For assurance comes from God, reposes in the Spirit, and anchors in the Word; security, on the other hand, comes from hell, reposes in the flesh, and anchors in nothing (הֶבֶל). Ps. 39, 5. And as surely as the flesh and the Spirit are contrary the one to the other, Gal. 5, 17, just so surely assurance and security are contrary the one to the other. The assurance of grace dispels security as the sun dispels the night. And despite this truth, people would twist these texts which reprove security in order to safeguard assurance into argu-

3) [Marginal reading: *confidence, assurance*. Luther: *gewisse Zuversicht*.]

ments against their chief purpose; they would throw the walls of their own fortress into its moats! The fear which the Scriptures recommend does not conflict with the assurance of grace, but with the security of the flesh. David says: "What time I am afraid I will trust in Thee." Ps. 56, 3. Yes, out of perpetual fear flows perpetual faith. Our heart is so hard that it will not believe unless it is first made to tremble; only the afflicted give heed to the Word. Therefore they are blessed, that is, in God's perpetual grace, "that fear alway; but he that hardeneth his heart shall fall into mischief (מִקְשָׁה לְבוֹ)." Prov. 28, 14; cp. Heb. 4, 1.

So, then, we shall pass the remainder of the time of our pilgrimage in perpetually endeavoring to get away from trusting in ourselves; for "he that trusteth in his own heart is a fool." Prov. 28, 26. But "the Lord is my Light and my Salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the Strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" Ps. 27, 1. Not to fear and to fear seems to be a contradiction, but it is not; for we are dual beings, with our feet on earth and our hands in heaven. Our feet tremble, but our hands hold the crown of righteousness in the City of God, with its streets of gold, which is above. Rev. 3, 11. From the beginning of the world God has dealt with His children in this way: "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles; . . . for he looked for a city which hath foundation, whose builder and maker is God." Heb. 11, 8—10. "By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac; and he that had received the promise offered up his only-begotten son, of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called, accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead." Heb. 11, 17—19. Likewise Moses, though trembling, yet full of confidence, "forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured, as seeing Him who is invisible." Heb. 11, 27. Thus they "out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight," in spite of "mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover in bonds and imprisonment." Heb. 11, 36. And the dear apostles also had tribulation, and yet in Christ they were of good cheer, John 16, 33; they feared and feared not, 2 Cor. 4, 7, 9; they were sorrowful, yet always rejoicing. 2 Cor. 6, 10. So well do fear and assurance agree. Yes, we shall rejoice with Paul: "I have the assurance of grace," Rom. 8, 38, 39, only as long as we complain

with him: "Without fightings, within fears (ἐξωθεν μάχαι, ἔσωθεν φόβοι)." 4) 2 Cor. 7, 5. That is also the doctrine of the Fathers.⁵⁾

4) [Charlotte Elliott: "Fightings and fears within, without."]

5) Apology. *Trigl.*, 155. 209. 277. 279. Smalcald Articles. *Trigl.*, 517. Formula of Concord. *Trigl.*, 1063—1095, especially 1063. 1067. 1085. 1087. — Luther, Of sure grace: St. Louis Ed., XI, 717—721. 920 ff.; II, 2059—2060. Of fear and its relation to assurance: II, 149. 150. 1917. 1918; IV, 415—417. 921. 922. 1723—1725. — Chemnitz, in his *Examen*, begins the *excursus* on this subject with the question: *An vera fides justificans sit vel fiducia vel dubitatio de remissione peccatorum?* and answers that two things must be distinguished, the *certitudo justificationis praesentis* and the *certitudo perseverantiae*. Concerning the second point he says: *Non docendi sunt homines, quomodocunque se gerant, non posse ipsos ex-cidere gratia Dei. Scriptum est enim Rom. XI: Si permanserit in bonitate; Heb. III: Modo fiduciam retineant usque ad finem. Sed monendi sunt, ut actiones carnis Spiritu mortificent et fide firmiter inhaereant Christo, illique per usum Verbi et sacramentorum magis magisque uniantur et petant a Deo donum perseverantiae. Et hoo modo non debent dubitare de perseverantia, sed statuere juxta promissiones, Phil. I: Confirmabit vos usque in finem, etc. Finally: Agitant has Scripturae sententias: 1 Cor. X: Qui stat, videat ne cadat. Phil. II: Cum timore et tremore, etc. Ad has sententias responsio est: Monent, ne persuasione certitudinis de salute degeneremus in carnalem securitatem, qua ipsa fides exstinguitur. Sunt ergo hae sententiae non conciones de dubitatione fidei, sed exhortationes, ne fides possidens certitudinem salutis vel securitate exstinguatur, vel actionibus carnis excutiat, sed exerceatur perpetuo in lucta contra carnem, ne illius petulantia effundatur gratia, Spiritus Sanctus et certitudo salutis. Then follow the excellent closing remarks. (Chemnitius, *Examen Conc. Trid.*, Ed. Francoforti, 165—173.)*

The Marks of Justification.

From Dr. E. Preuss's *Die Rechtfertigung*, Part VIII.

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So we have full, perpetual, and sure forgiveness. But that is something within us, and hence no one can know for certain whether his neighbor has it or not. Therefore in order that we may not err in our judgment when trying the spirits, God has given us two marks by which we can know whether a person is in the state of forgiveness or not. These two marks are the confession of the mouth and good works. Not good works alone, otherwise many would be in the state of grace who reject Christ. True, ancient and modern obscurants wish to persuade us that good works alone testify to the presence of justification, and in that way they, like the honorable Sultan Saladin, try to bring themselves into heaven on a bypath. God's house, however, has no small side-entrance; it has only *one door*, and that door is Christ. For beside this name there is none other under heaven given among men whereby they can be saved, even though they do all the good works that can be performed. The first mark, then, of the presence of God's perpetual grace is confession of Christ. Where that is wanting, there forgiveness of sins cannot even be thought of. On the other hand, where it is found, there we may at least assume that faith is present in the heart. And where there is faith, there is also forgiveness. Therefore Christ attaches so much weight to our confessing Him freely and openly before men. He says: "Whosoever shall confess Me¹⁾ before men, him will I confess also before My Father which is in heaven." Matt. 10, 32. 33. On the basis of this declaration we say: Where there is a joyous confession of the Lord, there is also forgiveness; otherwise He would not confess in heaven the name of him who confesses His name here on earth. In fact, He caused the pillar among His apostles to make such a confession not only Matt. 16, 16. 17, but again after his denial of Him and his conversion. Christ knew very well what was in man, but He wished it to become publicly known that he who had fallen had found grace

1) Ομολογήσει ἐν ἑμοί. So that his confession abides in Me.

again. John 21, 15—17.²⁾ So also Paul connects faith and its natural mark, confession, most closely, Rom. 10, 9, 10; yes, he says that he who calls Jesus his Lord has the Holy Ghost, 1 Cor. 12, 3. And, finally, John directly designates the confession of Christ as the mark of a person's being of God and dwelling in Him. 1 John 4, 1, 2 he exhorts his readers: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God. . . . Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God; and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God." And toward the end of the chapter we read: "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him and he in God." 1 John 4, 15. And similarly 2 John 9, 10: "Whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him Godspeed." The confession of the mouth, therefore, is the very first mark of one's being in the state of grace. At any rate, we can conclude with certainty that he who does not confess Christ or even denies Him is not of God or at least did not abide in Him.

On the other hand, we cannot conclude with certainty that all who confess with their mouths are in the state of grace; for many will say, "Lord, Lord," but they do not have forgiveness. Therefore God has connected the testimony of works with the confession of the mouth. It is only when both are together that we have the certainty that a person is actually in the state of grace. Matt. 7, 21 we read: "Not every one³⁾ that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven." But nowhere does this "doing" become so apparent as in the works of love. There-

2) *Totum hoc colloquium cum Petro fuit institutum, qui muneri suo apostolico, ex quo trina negatione exciderat, trina confessione restituitur. . . . Christus nominatim coram aliis discipulis ipsum alloquitur, ut non solum de vocatione ipsemet in conscientia esset certus, sed etiam reliqui discipuli cognoscerent, Petrum, peculiariter lapsum, . . . restitutum esse.* (John Gerhard, in *Harmonia*, III, 328. 329.) — Of course, the main point here is the reinstatement of Peter into his office. This, however, could take place only after he had been forgiven. So the confession of Peter, which was repeated three times, was, above all, a testimony to the fact that he was again in a state of grace.

3) *Οὐ πᾶς*. Not every one, yet some.

fore the Lord says directly, John 13, 35: "By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another." Discipleship, therefore, or the fact of one's being a Christian, or the state of grace⁴⁾ — use whichever name you please — is not exclusively known by one's confession of the Christian faith, but also by one's works, especially by works of love. John teaches this also. For after having said: "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him and he in God," 1 John 4, 15, he adds by way of complement: "And he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him," 1 John 4, 16. Just so 1 John 4, 7. 8. And 1 John 3, 14 he says: "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." Here he expressly designates love as a mark of the transition from death unto life, that is, of justification.⁵⁾ What is more, 1 John 3, 10 he says: "In this the children of God *are manifest* and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother." Compare also 1 John 3, 11. On the other hand, "every one that doeth righteousness is born of Him [God]." 1 John 2, 29. And in somewhat different words: "Whosoever abideth in Him [God] sinneth not. Whosoever sinneth hath not seen Him, neither known Him." 1 John 3, 6.⁶⁾ And again: "And hereby we do know that we know Him if we keep His commandments. He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." 1 John 2, 3. 4. In short, the fact alone that a person confesses Christ with his mouth does not conclusively prove that he is in a state of grace; no, good works, especially the works of love, must be present along with it. So well did the disciple whom Jesus loved understand the doctrine of his Master. Also St. Paul directly concludes that, where there are no works of love, faith, and with it forgiveness, has been lost. He says: "If any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith and is worse than an infidel." 1 Tim. 5, 8; compare 2 Pet. 1, 9. And Gal. 5, 6 he shows, *vice versa*, by what marks true justifying faith is known, saying: "In Christ Jesus neither circumcision

4) *Μαθηταί* are Christians. Acts 6, 2. 7; 9, 26; especially 11, 26.

5) 1 John 3, 14: *Translati sumus de morte ad vitam. Synekdochice [hio] effectus pro toto actu justificationis ponitur.* (M. Flacius, *Clavis*, 515.)

6) *Ἀμαρτάνειν*, in this text, is not the same as *ἀμαρτίαν ἔχειν*, which, according to 1 John 1, 8, also applies to the saints, but as much as *ἀμαρτίαν ποιεῖν*, to commit sin, as 1 John 3, 9 proves.

availeth anything nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by love." That does not mean that faith availeth anything before God *in so far* as it works by love, — for Paul certainly is the last man on earth whom one would dare to charge with that error, — but it means that only *that* faith justifies which by works of love outwardly proves itself to be a living faith.⁷⁾ Confession of the mouth, consequently, and the works of love are inseparable sisters. If the works of love are wanting, then also the confession of the mouth is hypocritical; if the confession is wanting, then the works are not genuine. He is in a state of grace in whom both are found. If a man professes to be a follower of Mahomet, he has no forgiveness even if he feeds ten thousand poor. If a man confesses that he is a disciple of Christ and serves sin, he is a child of hell. For justification is known by two marks, not by one.⁸⁾ This is also the doctrine of the Fathers.⁹⁾

From the viewpoint of this doctrine we also understand the words of the Lord which have caused so much controversy: "Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much." The

7) *Μάνθανε οὖν, ὅτι ἡ πίστις ἐνεργεῖται μὲν δι' ἀγάπης, τούτοις ζωσα δέικνυται.* (Theophylact.) — *Non nego, Paulum attingere beneficium justificationis, ad quod obtinendum neque circumcisio neque praeputium quid valeat, sed fides. Quod autem additur: per caritatem operans, non haec causam justitiae exprimunt, sed tantum ad periphrasticam notationem fidei spectant. Etenim quia docuerat Paulus, solam fidem in Christo Jesu valere, ne quis vana persuasione fidei seipsum falleret, apostolus ad retinendam inanem jactantiam hypocritarum per adjunctum effectum definire voluit, quod ea demum sit fides justificans, quae per caritatem sese non mortuam, sed vivam esse operando declaret, quantumvis non hac operatione, quae proximum spectat, sed altera diviniore, qua Deum et Christum intuetur, salvet ac beet homines.* (A. Hunnius, *De Justificatione*, 180. 181.)

8) Therefore the apostle recommends both in one breath, Heb. 13, 15. 16, and thanks God for both, 2 Cor. 9, 13.

9) Regarding the confession of the mouth see *Apology* (Trigl., 225): *Paulus sic loquitur, quod confessio salvet, ut ostendat, qualis fides consequatur vitam aeternam, nempe firma et efficax fides. Non est autem firma fides, quae non ostendit se in confessione.* Compare *Apology* (Trigl., 177). — With respect to the works of love we read in the *Formula of Concord* (Trigl., 923): "Therefore true, saving faith is not in those who are without contrition and sorrow and have a wicked purpose to remain and persevere in sins; but true contrition precedes, and genuine faith is in or with, true repentance. Love is also a fruit which surely and necessarily follows true faith. For the fact that one does not love is a sure indication that he is not justified, but still in death or has lost the righteousness of faith again, as John says, 1 John 3, 14. Compare also *Apology* (Trigl., 175).

story in which these words occur is recorded Luke 7, 36—50: “And one of the Pharisees desired Him that He would eat with him. And He went into the Pharisee’s house and sat down to meat. And, behold, a woman in the city which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee’s house, brought an alabaster box of ointment and stood at His feet behind Him weeping, and began to wash His feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed His feet, and anointed them with the ointment. Now, when the Pharisee which had bidden Him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if He were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth Him; for she is a sinner. And Jesus, answering, said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on. There was a certain creditor which had two debtors; the one owed five hundred pence and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell Me therefore, which of them will love him most? Simon answered and said, I suppose that he to whom he forgave most. And He said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged. And He turned to the woman and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house; thou gavest Me no water for My feet, but she hath washed My feet with tears and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest Me no kiss; but this woman hath anointed My feet with ointment. Wherefore I say unto thee (*οὗ χάριν λέγω σοι*), *Her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little. And He said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven. And they that sat at meat with Him began to say within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins also? And He said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.*”

The whole matter is perfectly clear if we take the little word *for* in the clause “for she loved much” as basis of discernment,¹⁰⁾ namely, thus: “Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; that is seen from the fact that she loved much, that is, that here, in your

10) [See THEOL. MONTHLY, Vol. VIII, p. 323, Note 3. — *Particula in „Esurivi enim,” etc., Matt. 25, 35, nequaquam habet significationem causalem, sed RATIOCINATIVAM. Neque enim hic a causis ad effectum, sed ab effectis ad antegressam causam ratiocinatur; hoc est, probat ex operibus misericordiae, fideles illos vere esse tales, quales ipsos proclamet, nempe haeredes regni. . . . Sic itaque Christus opera allegabit, non ut fontem vel causam aeternae haereditatis, sed ut testes declarantes, fidem electorum . . . sese protulisse per caritatem in facta seu opera. (A. Hunnius, De Justificatione, 229.)*]

presence, she has shown Me much love." I hope it will not be asserted that this explanation of *for* was invented by me or by any other orthodox person for the special purpose of interpreting this text. At least the non-orthodox Aristotle knows the use of *for* as basis of discernment very well. Yes, he even makes a special class of such clauses as is the one in our text.¹¹⁾ And it cannot be denied that he had a thorough knowledge, not only of logic, but also of the Greek language. So we quote the example from his writings: "He has fever, *for* he breathes hard"; and we add another one, which is still better known: "It is raining, *for* the flagstones are wet." Now the moisture on the pavement is certainly not the cause, but the consequence of the rain, although it causes us to notice the rain. Therefore the clause must be circumscribed thus: "It is raining; this is seen from the fact that the flagstones are wet." Also in the Holy Scriptures this way of speaking is very common.¹²⁾ We read, for instance, 1 Cor. 10, 5: "But with many of them God was not well pleased; *for* they were overthrown in the wilderness." How is it possible to take *for* in this text in any other way than as basis of discernment? Is it not senseless to say: The fact that God overthrew many Israelites was the reason why He was not well pleased with them? Is it not the other way: God was not well pleased with them; this was seen from the fact that He overthrew them in the wilderness? In the same way we circumscribe Luke 7, 47: Much was forgiven her; this is seen from the fact that she loved much.¹³⁾ The preceding parable shows that we *must* circumscribe that way. We do not wish to quarrel about the question whether the Pharisee Simon was the debtor who owed the fifty denarii or not. It is irrelevant here whether little or nothing at all was forgiven him. One thing, however, is certain, namely: first the debts of both debtors were remitted, and then they loved. So, then, love in this parable is the consequence of the remittance of the debt. Philippi is right when he says: "It would certainly be a most arbitrary and senseless perversion of thought if, in the interpretation of the

11) Aristotle, *Rhetorices*, I: . . . *ὅτι νοσεῖ, πυρέττει γάρ, ἣ τέτοκεν ὅτι γάλα ἔχει . . . ὅτι πυρέττει . . . πυκνὸν γὰρ ἀναπνέει* [. . . he is ill, for he has fever, or she has become a mother, for she has milk . . . he has fever, for he breathes hard].

12) Matt. 16, 2, 3; 26, 73; John 16, 27 [comp. 1 John 4, 10, 19]; Acts 4, 33, 34; Ps. 116, 10.

13) So the Fathers of the Evangelical [Lutheran] Church without exception.

parable, love were suddenly called the cause of the forgiveness, while in the parable itself it appeared as the consequence of the forgiveness. Furthermore, this opinion conflicts with the antithesis which immediately follows. For the Lord does not proceed: 'To another one, however, little is forgiven because he loved little,' but: 'To whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.' Now, if the secondary statement says: 'Little love is the consequence of little forgiveness,' then the primary statement must also have the meaning: 'Abundant love is the consequence of abundant forgiveness,' and not: 'Abundant love is the cause of abundant forgiveness.'" (Philippi, *Glaubenslehre*, V, 1, 222. Compare also Luther, St. Louis Ed., VII, 1456—1458.) And finally, as regards the repeated forgiveness which the woman who was a sinner received, it by no means follows that one forgiveness was more abundant than the other. Christ might forgive you seventy times in one day, and yet you would not receive more at one time than at another. Moreover, these two absolutions are of a peculiar import. The great sinner had received full forgiveness long before; yes, she lived in this forgiveness as in her element. And it was this forgiveness from which flowed her humble love, a love which contained both, frank and open confession of Christ and good works. By these two marks it became manifest that she was now in a state of grace. Therefore she must needs be publicly absolved in spite of all pharisaic cavils. Therefore Christ first of all addresses His words to the Pharisee: "Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest Me no water for My feet; but she hath washed My feet with tears and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest Me no kiss; but this woman hath anointed My feet with ointment. Wherefore"—that is, on the basis of all these manifest facts—"I say *unto thee*, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven," or, as Luther circumscribes: "Because she publicly gives testimony of her faith by fruits meet for repentance, therefore she shall also *in your presence* be publicly absolved and regarded righteous." (St. Louis Ed., VII, 1459.) And then the Lord turns to the woman and repeats His declaration. Of course, God forgives when He says: "I forgive thee." Therefore the poor sinful woman received forgiveness at least twice; once, before she anointed Jesus' feet; the second time, through the Word which Christ spoke to her. It is even probable that she received forgiveness more than a thousand times before her blessed death. However, that is not at all the reason why Luke records this story. What makes this story remarkable and unique is this, that a public

sinner, on the basis of her public confession of Christ and her public works of love, is publicly justified. (Luther. St. Louis Ed., VII, 1456—1466.) The doctrine which flows from this is very important, namely, that there is a concealed and a public justification. The concealed justification takes place through faith, Luke 7, 50; public justification takes place according to the measure of confession and works of love.¹⁴ We have an analogy even in the case of a bodily healing. The woman who had an issue of blood secretly touched the Lord and was secretly healed; for as soon as she had touched Him, “straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up, and she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague.” Nevertheless Jesus still asks: “Who touched my clothes?” And when the woman, fearing and trembling, fell down before Him and told Him all the truth, He publicly confirmed that which had taken place in secret, saying: “Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace and be whole of thy plague.” Mark 5, 25—34. Concealed and public healing, concealed and public forgiveness, must carefully be kept separate. Concealed forgiveness is received by concealed faith; public forgiveness is received by that faith which by confession and works of love has come out into the bright light of the sun.¹⁵

14) Luke 7, 47, namely, *propter hanc mulieris confessionem et haec opera.*

15) *Duplex est absolutio. Altera privata conscientiae luctantis cum ira Dei. In hac absolute necesse est intelligi, quod fide accipiat remissio, non propter nostras virtutes. Altera est absolutio publica coram ecclesia. In hac conspici necesse est ab aliis testimonia conversionis, ut hic Christus Phariseo ostendit, cur eam recipiat, quia exstent testimonia conversionis.* (*Examen Ordinandorum*, 1593; III, 352.)

Good Works.

Translated from Dr. E. Preuss's *Die Rechtfertigung*, Part IX.

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Faith is a light, and good works are its rays. The Lord said to His disciples: "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Matt. 5, 16; cp. 1 Pet. 2, 12. Good works are testimonies for, and fruits of,¹⁾ faith. Christ says: "Every good tree bringeth forth good fruit, but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit." Matt. 7, 17, 18; cp. with v. 21. And Paul calls love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, "the fruit of the Spirit." Gal. 5, 22. See also Titus 3, 14; Col. 1, 10. The fruits stand in a twofold relation to the tree: first, the tree bears them, that is, it puts forth buds and nourishes them with its sap; secondly, seeing the fruits, one can tell the species of the tree. So faith, through the Holy Spirit, brings forth good works and, *vice versa*, is known by them. Matt. 7, 20 we read: "By their fruits ye shall know them." And when the Apostle James wishes to describe "the wisdom that is from above," he says: "It is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits." Jas. 3, 17. Such honor is due good works. But they have nothing to do with our atonement. The tree does not draw nourishment from the soil by means of the fruits, but through the roots. So we at all times apprehend Christ, our Lord, by faith alone and receive from Him forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation. Therefore Luther is right when he says: "Inwardly we become godly through faith; outwardly we show our faith through works of love. For Scripture speaks of man in a twofold way, first, of the inner, secondly, of the outer man. For Scripture must needs make this distinction when speaking of man. When I am speaking of the foot, I cer-

1) 1 Tim. 5, 8, 10: ἐν ἔργοις καλοῖς μαρτυροῦμένη. Titus 2, 7—10.

tainly cannot speak of the nose. Therefore Scripture sometimes speaks of us as of the spirit, how it by faith must stand before God. God sends His Word and along with it His Spirit; to this we cling. Hence the tree must now be good. At other times, Scripture speaks of us as of the *outer* man, as in flesh and blood we walk with other men. For you do not know that I am godly; therefore I must do good to my neighbor in order that there be an outward sign or proof of my faith. Hence the external works are only signs of the inner faith within me." 2)

As there are two aspects to our being, so God also deals with us in a twofold manner. First, in secret. "He that believeth on Him [the Son of God] is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already because he believeth not in the name of the only-begotten Son of God." John 3, 18. This no one can see, and yet it is truly so. Secondly, publicly, on the Last Day. The secret judgment takes place according to the concealed faith, the public judgment according to the works done in public.³⁾ Therefore Paul says: "After thy hardness and impenitent heart thou treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to every man *according to his deeds*" (*κατὰ τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ*). Rom. 2, 5. 6. And John writes, Rev. 20, 12: "The dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works" (*κατὰ τὰ ἔργα αὐτῶν*). And again, v. 13: "They [the dead] were judged every man according to their works." Yes, the Lord Himself warns us: "Behold, I come quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his works shall be." Rev. 22, 12; cp. also John 5, 29. According to this it is certain that in the Last Judgment, since it will be public, man will be judged according to his works. For in what other way could the justice of this judgment be made visible to men and angels, who will be present? We shall be declared just *according to* the works, but not *on account of* the works; for the works are not the basis of the divine judgment, but the visible testimony that this judg-

2) Luther. St. Louis Ed., XI, 1450 f.; XIV, 99 f.; XIX, 1431 f. Formula of Concord. *Conc. Trigl.*, 927—931.

3) Causa vero, quod in die ultimo, quum salutis per fidem donatio solenniter promulgabitur, non tamen secundum fidem, sed secundum opera iudicium extremum feretur, est, quod iudicium illud sit futurum visibile et notorium, fides autem soli καρδιогνώστη sit cognita. (Henry Hoepfner, *De Justificatione*, 154.)

ment is just.⁴⁾ Therefore they are also called “the things which are written in the books” of God. Rev. 20, 12. Written documents are used in court to convict the criminal and as testimony for the truth. So the works will be used on the Last Day publicly to convict the ungodly and as a public testimony to our faith. In secret God has already judged long before. First, in time, according to faith, John 3, 18; the second time, in death, again according to faith. For when John in a rapture beheld the souls of the just before the throne of God and asked in amazement: “What are these?” he was told: “These are they which came out of great tribulation and have washed their robes and made them white *in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore,*” and for no other reason, “are they before the throne of God.” Rev. 7, 9—17. So the Last Day finds the great separation accomplished long before; not according to the works, but the deciding factor is whether one found forgiveness in the blood of Christ. The *purpose of the Last Day* is to make known this separation which was accomplished long before. And this is done by means of the testimony of the works. Otherwise eternal life would not be a gift of grace, but wages that are due. But St. Paul expressly calls it a gift of grace. It is remarkable that he begins Rom. 6, 23 with the words: “The wages of sin is death,” but instead of proceeding: “and the wages of good works is eternal life,” he says the very opposite, namely: “but eternal life is [not wages, but] the gift of God’s grace through Jesus Christ, our Lord.”⁵⁾

All doubt, however, is dispelled by Matt. 25, 31—36: “When the Son of Man shall come in His glory and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory; and

4) Non per aut propter opera [Paulus] dari vitam aeternam pronuntiat, sed secundum illa, h. e., secundum testimonium bonorum operum, prout ea de alicuius vel fide vel infidelitate perhibent testimonium. Nam quia solenne illud orbis iudicium futurum est conspicuum, ideo invisibilis et in corde latentis fidei visibiles producentur testes, opera fidei, quae in hoc mundo incurrerant in hominum oculos et sentiri palam quiverant. (Aegidius Hunnius, *De Justificatione*, 226.) — Aliud est, Deum iudicare secundum opera, quod exstat in Scripturis, aliud dare vitam aeternam propter opera, quod est figmentum papale. (B. Mentzer, *Disputationes*, 275.)

5) It is true that Scripture also speaks of a future reward, *e. g.*, Rev. 22, 12, and in other passages; however, that is not a wage due us, but a reward of grace. Rom. 4, 4. 5; 6, 23.

before Him shall be gathered all nations. And He shall separate them one from another as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats; and He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand, Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was an hungred, and ye gave Me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took Me in; naked, and ye clothed Me; I was sick, and ye visited Me; I was in prison, and ye came unto Me." First, then, a public and solemn separation will take place; the sheep are set to the right and the goats to the left. Consequently the basis of this separation is not what men have done, but what they are. Whoever is a sheep of Christ stands on the right; whoever is not a sheep of Christ, to the left. The question how a person *became* a sheep of Christ does here not come into consideration at all. Now, to these sheep, who are His own, who know His voice, John 10, 4, the Lord says: "Come, ye blessed of My Father." How did they become blessed? In Christ, Eph. 1, 3, through faith, Gal. 3, 9. These persons who were blessed long ago Christ calls and says: "Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Therefore, they do not receive wages, but an inheritance; not because they labored, but because they are children. Rom. 8, 17 we read: "And if [we are] children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ." The kingdom which was prepared for us from the foundation of the world is therefore not given us on the Last Day on account of our works, but on the basis of the blessing with which God has blessed us in Christ as an inheritance, according to the right of children.⁶⁾ In order, however, that all who are gathered around the throne may see that this is a just judgment, the Judge proceeds: "For⁷⁾ I was an hungred, and ye gave Me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took Me in; naked, and ye clothed Me; I was sick, and ye visited Me; I was in prison, and ye came to Me." And when the saints ask in surprise when and where they served Him in that way, He replies: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My

6) Therefore Rom. 3, 27 also holds good in this connection.

7) *Ἐπειόσα γάρ*. Matt. 25, 35. *Γάρ* is used as indicating basis of discernment, as in 1 Cor. 10, 5 and in other texts.

brethren, ye have done it unto Me." Matt. 25, 37—40. In this way all the world is to see that the faith by which they received the adoption of sons, John 1, 12, was not hypocritical.⁸⁾ Then the Judge turns to those at His left and says: "And ye other ones have indeed been cursed long ago; but lest any one should imagine that this was an injustice, tell Me: Did you ever give Me meat by feeding My hungry brethren? Did you ever give Me drink or clothe Me or visit Me? This you did not do." And they go away into everlasting punishment.⁹⁾

In the light of this simple description of the procedure at the Last Judgment we also understand Luke 16, 9, where Christ says: "Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that, when ye fail (*ὅταν ἐκλείπητε*), they may receive you into everlasting habitations." Luther says: "When I come before God's Judgment, a poor man to whom I have done good will stand in heaven and say: 'He washed my feet; he gave me meat, drink, clothing.' That man will certainly be my friend and a witness for my faith, whatever words he may use to express his testimony. At that time a beggar will be of more use to me than St. Peter." (St. Louis Ed., XI, 1951.) Aegidius Hunnius writes to the same effect: "On the Last Day the poor will receive their benefactors with the testimony which the Son of God will bear in their stead and in their name in favor of the godly persons who were wealthy. By this testimony He will show publicly that their faith was not hypocritical, but abounded in good works and therefore was a genuine and living faith. For this fact there will be as many witnesses

8) Particula γὰρ in „Esurivi enim," etc., nequaquam habet significationem causalem, sed ratiocinativam. Neque enim hic a causis ad effectum, sed ab effectis ad antegressam causam ratiocinatur; h. e., probat ex operibus misericordiae, fideles illos vere esse tales, quales ipsos proclamet, nempe haeredes regni, siquidem fidem suam, accipiendae haereditatis coelestis ὄργανον, tam illustribus documentis testatam reddiderint. Sic itaque Christus opera allegabit, non ut fontem vel causam aeternae haereditatis, sed ut testes declarantes, fidem electorum non in nuda gloriatione fuisse sitam, sed sese protulisse per caritatem in facta seu opera. Summa brevissima est haec: Pronuntio ego vos electos et sempiterni regni haeredes. Unde vero id probas, Jesu Christe? Inde videlicet, quia, quum esurirem et sitirem ego in membris meis, paverunt et potarunt illi me et fidei suae veritatem his testibus ad oculum comprobarunt. (Aegidius Hunnius, *De Justificatione*, 229.)

9) Matt. 25, 41. 42. 43. 45. 46. Luther. St. Louis Ed., XI, 1451.

as there are persons who were succored by them in this life.”¹⁰⁾

This public justification does, however, take place not only on the Last Day, but very often also before that day. For did not the Lord publicly absolve the great sinner in the presence of the Pharisee and his company? (Luther. St. Louis Ed., VII, 1456 to 1461.) And always according to the works. Christ said to the Pharisee: “Seest thou this woman? . . . She hath washed My feet with tears and wiped them with the hairs of her head. . . . Since the time I came in, [she] hath not ceased to kiss My feet; . . . she hath anointed My feet with ointment. *Wherefore* I say unto *thee*, her sins, which are many, are forgiven.” Luke 7, 44—46.¹¹⁾

The great sinner is, however, not the only example of such public absolution according to works. Also to the bishop of Philadelphia, God promises: “Behold, I will make them of the synagog of Satan, which say they are Jews and are not, but do lie, — behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet and to know that I have loved thee.” Rev. 3, 9. And when God, in the midst of the last great persecution of the Christians, visited Asia Minor with pestilence and famine, the harassed Christians came from their hiding-places and buried the dead, comforted the dying, and nursed the sick. Then the heathen glorified the God of the Christians and confessed that they alone were truly godly people.¹²⁾ Thus God publicly justifies His children by their works. True, He does not always do that, nor with all His children, while the secret justification is bestowed upon us continuously.¹³⁾ However, “when

10) In novissimo die recipient benefactores suos egeni suo testimonio, quod illorum vice atque nomine Filius Dei perhibebit piis divitibus, publice testificaturus, fidem eorum non inanem, sed bonis operibus gravidam atque sic vivam veram et non simulatam fuisse; cujus tot habebunt vivos testes, quot ex pauperum grege beneficentiam eorum in hoc mundo sunt experti. (Aegidius Hunnius, *De Justificatione*, 231.)

11) Luther. St. Louis Ed., VII, 1459. (See quotation in THEOL. MONTHLY, 1929, p. 135.)

12) Ὡς περιβόητον εἰς πάντας ἀνθρώπους καταστήναι τὸ πρᾶγμα, θεὸν τε τῶν Χριστιανῶν δοξάζειν, εὐσεβεῖς τε καὶ μόνους θεοσεβεῖς τούτους ἀληθῶς, πρὸς αὐτῶν ἐλεγχθέντας τῶν πραγμάτων, ὁμολογεῖν. (Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, Bk. IX, chap. 8.)

13) The expression “secret justification” is based on Rev. 2, 17: Ὁνομα καινὸν γεγραμμένον, ὃ οὐδεὶς οἶδεν εἰ μὴ ὁ λαμβάνων. Qui vicerit, vocabitur et erit Dei filius et haeres, Christi frater et cohaeres, civis Hierosolymae coelestis. Sed illud in vita est adhuc absconditum, 1 Joh. 3, 2; in iudicii die haec gloria piorum manifestabitur. Nomen “filiorum Dei” nemo novit, nisi qui accipit, quia fides, per quam illud nomen alicui obtingit, non potest ab aliis videri. 1 Cor. 2, 11. — Compare Chr. Fr. Richter’s hymn *Es glänzet der Christen inwendiges Leben*, s. l.

a man's ways please the Lord, He maketh his enemies to be at peace with him (יִשְׁלַם אֹתוֹ).” Prov. 16, 7. In Ps. 31, 19 both things are linked together: “Oh, how great is Thy goodness which Thou *hast laid up* [Luther: *verborgen hast*] for them that fear Thee; which Thou *hast wrought* [Luther: *erzeigest*] for them that trust in Thee before the sons of men!”

Now, just as Scripture knows secret and public justification, so it also knows secret and public judgment. The secret judgment takes place on the basis of unbelief. “He that believeth not is condemned already because he hath not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God.” John 3, 18. The other judgment is public and takes place on the basis of shameful works, for example, the Flood, the destruction of Sodom, the drowning of the Egyptians in the Red Sea.

The entire New Testament treats of secret justification, especially the Epistle to the Romans. The Epistle of St. James treats of public justification. Jas. 2, 14 begins thus: “What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man *say* he hath faith and have not works? [That] faith [in the mouth] cannot save him, can it?” Just as the Lord says Matt. 7, 21. 22: “Not every one that *saith* unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that *doeth* the will of My Father which is in heaven.” And 1 John 3, 7: “Little children, let no man deceive you; he that *doeth* righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous.” Such admonitions are very necessary; for our wicked nature distorts everything, so that a caricature results. For example, God encourages His people to fast. Joel 2, 12. They do fast, but they “fast for strife and debate and smite with the fist of wickedness,” Is. 58, 4, so that God chides them thus by the mouth of Isaiah: “Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? Is it to bow down his head as a bulrush and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? Wilt thou call this a fast and an acceptable day to the Lord?” Is. 58, 5. God requires fasting from us as a sign of our conversion, Joel 2, 12, and His crafty children intend to satisfy Him by fasting without conversion. So God also requires faith of the mouth, Rom. 10, 9. 10, but as the fruit of the faith of the heart which flows from repentance, and His shrewd children offer Him the faith of the mouth without the faith of the heart — the garment without the man in it. Can that be true faith, and can such a con-

fession be acceptable to the Lord?¹⁴) In the days of the apostle there must indeed have been many such counterfeiters; for the Apostle Paul speaks of people who profess to know God, but deny Him by the works they are doing. Titus 1, 16. And in another place he says that they have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof. 2 Tim. 3, 5. You fools, says St. James, do you think that it is the inscription which gives the value to the coin? It is the gold which does it! For also that love which is found only in the mouth is vain in itself. For instance, "if a brother or sister be naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace;¹⁵) be ye warmed and filled, notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body, what doth it profit (τί τὸ ὄφελος;)?" Jas. 2, 15. 16. Or as St. John says: "Whoso hath this world's good and seeth his brother have need and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth." 1 John 3, 17. 18; comp. 1 John 4, 20. Genuine love is known by two marks: words of love and works of love. Whoever loves with words only betrays that in fact he does not love at all. "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone." Jas. 2, 17.¹⁶) The hermit is dead to the world, but not dead in himself; but the faith

14) Fides apud Jacobum non accipitur pro fide justificante, sed pro externa fidei professione, ut ipse verborum sonus ostendit. Idem etiam probat scopus apostoli; disputat enim contra eos, qui doctrinam de justificatione fidei non recte percipientes multa de fide garriebant, eandem vero operibus non demonstrabant. Docet igitur, externam illam fidei professionem, si non sit conjuncta cum operibus bonis, non justificare. (John Gerhard, *Loci*, III, 473.)

15) Ὑπάγετε ἐν εἰρήνῃ, like πορεύεσθε ἐν εἰρήνῃ, Acts 16, 36.

16) Marg.: *by itself*. Luther: *tot an ihm selber*. — Simulatam istam fidem declarat et redarguit collatione simulatae caritatis, quae tantum in verbis inanique cogitatione consistat per se vanissima, proximo prorsus inutilis. Hinc manifeste liquet, Jacobum non de vera fide, sed de simulata ac, ut ita dicam, verballi loqui. (Flacius, *Glossa*, 1209 A.) — Quemadmodum non est vera caritas, quae nudis verbis egenum solatur, re ipsa autem nihil beneficii eidem exhibet, ita quoque non est vera fides, quae externa tantum professione jactatur, nulla bonorum operum fructificatione conspicua. (John Gerhard, *Loci*, III, 473.)

of which St. James is speaking here is dead in itself, like a corpse!¹⁷⁾ Furthermore, the apostle does not say that faith if it has not works is "dying," but that it is "dead." The absence of works like the absence of breath is a sign that it is no longer living. In this way St. James tried to bring him who *asserted* that he believe to his senses by using the example of a love which consists in mere words of the mouth. But he strikes him still harder. "So you assert that you believe although you have no works. Now, some one will come along and say:¹⁸⁾ 'Do show me your faith *without* your works.'¹⁹⁾ [This you cannot do.] I, however, will show you my faith by my works.' This is the center of the apostle's dissertation, the point of the whole epistle: the works are witnesses of faith. He who has no works cannot *show* his faith, for the simple reason that he has no faith. St. James says: "Who is a wise man

17) Ad significandum tanto evidentius hunc defectum formae intrinsecae, dicimus addi ab apostolo tanquam *ἐμπατικόν τι*, quod mala fides sit mortua καὶ *ἐαυτήν* intrinsece, in semet ipsa, juxta substantiam suam mortua. Atque ita ipsa *διάνοια* vetat, ne *τό* mortuum esse intelligamus de solius actus secundi inevidentia. Fides [est] *in semet ipsa* mortua. (Huelsemann, *De Auxiliis Gratiae*, 395 A and 399 A. B.)

18) Ἄλλ' *ἐρεῖ τις*, Jas. 2, 18, occurs only once more in the New Testament, namely, 1 Cor. 15, 35, where it introduces an objection against a doctrine which Paul had presented. Evidently that is not the case in this text, as all exegetes admit. Nevertheless we must not without urgent reasons give up the meaning of ἄλλ' *ἐρεῖ τις* established by 1 Cor. 15, 35, namely, that of an objection against a preceding statement. The question, then, is: What in the preceding verses [14—17] is of such a nature that v. 18 can be taken as an objection to it? Evidently only *ἐὰν πιστὶν λέγῃ τις ἔχειν*. V. 14. With these words St. James began his discourse. "Here is one *who says* that he has faith, and yet he has not works. Now, some one will object that he cannot prove that." So ἄλλ' *ἐρεῖ τις* does indeed contain an interpellation; the only difference is that in this place it is not the apostle who is being interpellated, as 1 Cor. 15, 35, but the hypocrite, who is on the stage since v. 14 (*λέγει τις ἔχειν*). — Hanc esse justam provocationem jactatoris Jacobaei, factam ab eo, qui et fidem et opera simul habet. (John Huelsemann, *De Auxiliis Gratiae*, 406 B.)

19) I have condensed v. 18 somewhat to make it easier to understand this passage. The entire connection is as follows: The true Christian says to the swindler: "So you have faith [such is the assertion you make]." Locutio "Tu fidem habes" tantum per concessionem quandam aut etiam mimesin, non autem serio dicitur. (Flacius, *Glossa*, 1209 B.) "And I," so the true Christian proceeds, "have works [to show my faith thereby]." The καί is adversative, as in John 6, 70. "Do show me your faith without works." (According to Cod. A, B, C, Sin.: *Χωρὶς τῶν ἔργων*, not *ἐκ τῶν ἔργων*.) "This you cannot do. And I" [καί adversative, as before] "will show you my faith by my works."

and endued with knowledge among you? *Let him show* out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. But if ye have bitter envy and strife in your hearts, glory not and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish." Jas. 3, 13—15. And again: "If any man among you seem to be religious and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain." Jas. 1, 26. The apostle always concludes backwards, from works to faith. Where there are no works, there is no faith; faith must be *shown* by works.²⁰⁾ Suppose you possessed some sort of faith, then the absence of good works would still show that it is not saving faith. For example, "thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well [considering the polytheism of the heathen. This, however, will not yet save you, for] the devils also believe and tremble."²¹⁾ Jas. 2, 19.

And now comes the chief proof: "But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?"²²⁾ Was not Abraham, our

20) Apostolo ergo sermo est de ostensione et demonstratione fidei ex operibus, qua scilicet homo homini probat et declarat, se esse vere fidelem et justum. (Brochmand, *Systema*, II, 205 B.)

21) The opinion of De Wette that the clause with *οτι* already designates faith as a theoretical faith is groundless, as may be seen from John 17, 8; 13, 19. — The reason why St. James here suddenly introduces the demons is this: His thesis is: Where there are no good works, there is also no saving faith. All faith is false which does not manifest itself by good works. He shows this to be true, first, as regards the faith of the mouth vv. 14—18, and here, v. 19, also as regards the faith of the head. That St. James knows the genuine, saving faith very well may be seen from chap. 1, 21.

22) We read *νεκρά*, not *ἀργή*; first, on account of Cod. A and Sin.; secondly, for internal reasons. For what could that mean: "Faith without works is workless (*werklos*)?" ["*Workless* . . . — 2. Without works; not carried out or exemplified in works. — Ydle, *workless* faith. Sir T. More, *Works*, p. 411." — *Century Dictionary*, sub *workless*.] If we take the clause as it stands, it contains a tautology: The green tree is green. The only thing we could do would be to refer *ἀργή* to the public justification spoken of in the following and translate: Faith without works is inefficacious for justification. However, in an epanaleptic question, which once more sums up that which is to be proved in order to fortify it later on with new grounds, as a rule no foreign, not yet understandable, factor occurs. By the way, the *doctrine* is not in the least affected by the decision of the question whether *ἀργή* or *νεκρά* should be read. — *Κενός* means *empty, without spiritual contents*, as in 1 Cor. 15, 14; Eph. 5, 6. Hence a *κενός ἄνθρωπος* is a hollow babbler, one who has a form of godliness, but denies the power thereof. — *ὁ ἄνθρωπος*, the man who was introduced v. 14 (*ὁς λέγει πίστιν ἔχειν*) is still on the stage.

father, justified by works when he had offered Isaac, his son, upon the altar?" Jas. 2, 20. 21.²³⁾ Gen. 22, 10—12 we read that, after Abraham had taken the knife, "the Angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven and said, . . . Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him; for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from Me." Then follows the glorious promise: "Thy seed [I will multiply] as the sand which is upon the seashore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies. And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." Gen. 22, 16—18. What kind of justification²⁴⁾ is this? Were more sins forgiven here to Abraham on account of his obedience? The text does not say one syllable about that; but the Angel of the Lord declares publicly and distinctly, in the presence of Isaac and, therefore, of all men, that Abraham feared God. However, he who fears God in the Scriptural sense is justified.²⁵⁾ This justification took place in secret continuously ever since Abraham went out of Chaldea and never on the basis of good works, but, as Gen. 15, 6 testifies, by faith. Here, however, on the occasion of the humble obedience of Abraham, which at the same time was both a confession of God

23) From the very outset we shall expect no other proof than this, that Abraham, the father of the believers, in whom the genuine essence of faith certainly must have manifested itself by his works, proved his faith to be not a mere dead, pretended, but a true, living faith. If Abraham's example proves that only that faith which is active in works is a true, living faith, then it also proves, *vice versa*, that workless faith is dead in itself — quod erat demonstrandum. Now, just in regard to Abraham a statement of Scripture or a word of God was extant which the opponents who trusted in the naked, workless faith could quote in their defense, namely, the statement that his faith was counted unto him for righteousness. James himself admits this, 2, 23, and this is the very best proof that he absolutely agrees with Paul in the doctrine of the *justificatio sola fide*. It was, however, his business to prove to his opponents that this faith of Abraham by which alone he was justified and consequently also saved was not a dead, pretended faith, not a mere theoretical knowledge and assent, but true, living faith. Therefore it was necessary to describe more fully the quality of Abraham's faith. This is done in v. 21. (Philippi, *Glaubens-lehren*, V, 1, 302.)

24) For *δικαιοῦν* never means anything else in all the texts where it occurs in the New Testament, no matter whether secret or public justification is spoken of.

25) Ps. 112, 1; 115, 11. 13; 130, 4; 147, 11; Prov. 14, 27; 19, 23; Acts 19, 31.

and a good work, it is *publicly declared*. Therefore St. James must have meant public justification, Jas. 2, 21, otherwise he would have arbitrarily distorted Gen. 22 against the clear words of the text.²⁶⁾ If, however, he had God's public and solemn declaration in mind, then his story perfectly refuted those who had only faith of the mouth, for it was just Abraham²⁷⁾ to whom they pointed as an example of workless faith. "You fools," says St. James, "do you dare to compare yourselves with Abraham? I will show you the nature of Abraham's faith. It is true that God counted his faith unto him for righteousness (Jas. 2, 23), but that was not merely a faith of the mouth, but the works were *joint witnesses* [bezeugten mit] that it was genuine. Therefore Abraham was publicly justified in Isaac's and your presence."²⁸⁾ "Seest thou," proceeds the apostle, "how faith wrought with his works?"²⁹⁾ Jas. 2, 22. What does that mean? It is faith that effects the works. How, then, can it be said that faith works with³⁰⁾ them? The faith in the heart does, of course, not cooperate with the works in order to make one a partaker of public justification, but the faith of the mouth does. Cp. Jas. 2, 14. Therefore Balthasar Menzer is right when he says: "The faith on the lips literally cooperates with the works. For he who confesses the Christian faith and at the same time exhibits it by good works testifies by word and deed that he truly believes in God and therefore is justified. On the other hand, he who confesses Christ and at the same time lives in sin, or he who leads

26) Even Reformed writers admit this.

27) This must be concluded from Jas. 2, 23.

28) The verb *δικαιοῦν* signifies a judicial act in all the thirty-eight texts where it occurs in the New Testament. We translate to *absolve*, whether the absolution takes place in secret, as Luke 18, 14; Acts 13, 39; Rom. 3, 20. 24. 28. 30; 4, 5; 5, 1. 9; 8, 30. 33; Gal. 2, 16. 17; 3, 8. 11. 24; Titus 3, 7, or in public, as Matt. 12, 37; Luke 7, 29. 35; 10, 29; 16, 15; Rom. 3, 4; 2 Tim. 3, 16. — If one wishes to be exact, let him call the former, the secret act of God *regarding or considering one righteous, estimating him righteous, looking upon him as righteous, absolving him*, and the latter, the public act of God, *solemnly and publicly declaring one righteous, proclaiming him righteous*. Like the Greek verb *δικαιοῦν* so also the German word *rechtfertigen* [and the English verb *to justify*] means both. See Luther's [and the King James] translation of Matt. 12, 37 and 1 Tim. 3, 16. However if we simply speak of *justifying* without adding any modifier, we always mean *justum habere, justum reputare, absolvere*. The fathers of the Evangelical [Lutheran] Church unanimously say that *δικαιοῦν*, Jas. 2, 21, refers to public justification. — Potest namque justificatio duobus modis considerari, ut coram Deo fit et continuatur et ut coram Deo facta esse aut continuari declaratur hominibus. Priori modo considerat illam Paulus Rom. 3 et 4 nec non Gal. 2; posteriori modo Jacobus cap. 2. (H. Hoepfner, *De Justificatione*, 1063.)

29) Jas. 2, 22 is not a question, but a simple statement.

30) *Συνεργεῖν*. Cp. 1 Cor. 16, 16; 2 Cor. 6, 1.

a decent life, but knows nothing of Christ, of him we can say with certainty that he does not possess forgiveness. So it is neither the confession alone nor the good works alone that make a Christian, but faith and good works working together.”³¹⁾ However, James adds: “And by works was faith made perfect.”³²⁾

When we meet a ship on the ocean, we first see the sail, and then the hull becomes visible; in that way the vessel, to our view, becomes complete. So one hears the confession; but it is only when one sees the good works that faith becomes complete to the eye of man. Mere faith of the mouth is only half a faith, a sail without the hull of the ship.³³⁾ So, then, the faith of Abraham was made perfect before the eyes of all men by his act of obedience, “and the Scripture was [manifestly] fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness.” Philippi pertinently remarks on this point: The word of Scripture concerning the righteousness of faith of Abraham, this righteousness being as such invisible, was, until the time when it became visible by proof of works, so to speak, an unfulfilled prophecy. A statement is fulfilled when its content is confirmed by succeeding facts. Here we see that James and Paul are in perfect harmony. The justification of Abraham by faith, on which the whole struc-

31) *Professio fidei verissime cooperatur operibus; nam qui fidem Christianam profitetur et eandem simul exprimit bonis operibus, ille verbo et facto simul testatur ac confirmat, se vere in Deum credere, non simulate, ac proinde vere etiam esse justificatum. Quemadmodum contra, qui fidem profitetur in Christum et tamen impie vivit, aut externam quidem vitam honestam ac laudabilem agit, non tamen profitetur fidem Christianam, de eo certo statuitur, justificatum non esse. Neque igitur sola professio verum Christianum arguit, neque sola externa bona opera, sed conjunctim et professionis veritatis et bonorum operum sinceritas.* (B. Menzer, quoted by Hoepfner, *De Justificatione*, 1130.) — Walther von der Vogelweide held the same opinion when he sang: —

Swelch kristen kristentuomes giht,	Nu ist ab uns ir beider nôt:
an worten unde an werken niht,	das eine ist an' das ander tôt.
der ist wol half ein heiden.	Nu stiuere uns got an beiden.

32) Jas. 2, 22b. In regard to *τελειοῦν* see John 17, 4; Acts 20, 24.

33) Ex operibus fides consummata est, h. e., fidei illa professio per opera eidem consentanea coram hominibus demonstrata est, quod sit vera et viva fides, et sic in illo fine perfectionem suam adepta, quod scilicet hominibus vera esse cognita est. (John Gerhard, *Loci*, III, 474 B.) Please do not object that it is *we* who understand *πίστις* to mean one thing in this verse and another thing in the next one. It is not *we* who are doing this, but St. James. Try, if you will, to understand *πίστις* and *πιστεύω* throughout the whole chapter as referring to saving faith, and the result will be absolute nonsense [see chap. 2, 19], not to speak of the crass contradiction against all the rest of Scripture which would be artificially produced by this procedure.

ture of the Pauline doctrine rests, is also the basis of James's doctrine. The only difference is that James does not describe the procedure of Abraham's justification, but only the manner in which it authenticated itself by confession and works. Therefore Abraham was also "called a friend of God."³⁴) He *was* a friend of God long before, as Heb. 11, 8. 9. 10. 16 shows, but he was *called* a friend of God from the time he offered his only son to God and the Angel of the Lord bore him the distinct and solemn testimony that he feared God.³⁵) In general, that is God's order: first He adorns His children with the garment of Christ's righteousness, Is. 61, 10, then they glorify Him and do good works, Is. 51, 10; 62, 12, and finally they are perhaps also praised by the people, Is. 62, 7. "Ye see, then, how that by works man is justified and not by faith alone."³⁶) Here no escape is possible;³⁷) for James distinctly says that faith *and* works justify. Therefore he is either speaking of public justification, or he contradicts the whole Bible, first of all St. Paul. However, the entire connection of the chapter,³⁸) especially the story of Abraham, shows that he is indeed speaking of public justification. For the clause under consideration is nothing else than a conclusion drawn from Gen. 22. Because *Abraham* was justified by the confession of his mouth *and* by his works, therefore all believers are justified in the same manner; for Abraham is the father of all them that believe.³⁹) The apostle proceeds: "Likewise, was not Rahab, the harlot, justified by works

34) *Kai φίλος θεοῦ ἐκλήθη.* Jas. 2, 23. "Friend of God" means both, *one who loves God* and *one who is loved by God.* 2 Chron. 20, 7; Is. 41, 8; Song of the Three Holy Children, v. 12 (A. V.).

35) By whom was he called "friend of God"? Among others by Isaiah, chap. 41, 8, and by the author of 2 Chron. 20, 7; Song of the Three Holy Children, v. 11.

36) Jas. 2, 24. *Ὁρᾶτε* is the indicative.

37) Also the phrase *fides per opera* will not help us to escape, for James plainly places both side by side: *fides et opera.*

38) Jas. 2, 14: *fides in ore*; vv. 15. 16: *fides in ore per exemplum amoris* in ore convicta; v. 18: *ostende!*; vv. 20—23: *exemplum Abrahæ.*

39) Videtis, quoniam ex operibus justificatur homo, i. e., justus coram hominibus declaratur et non ex fide tantum, h. e., non ex nuda fidei professione. Opera sola sine fidei professione non justificant, h. e., vere fidelem Christianum arguunt, nec sola professio fidei sine operibus justificat sive justum et vere fidelem declarat, sed fidem et opera oportet esse conjuncta; verus enim Christianus is demum censendus, qui fidem in Christum publice profitetur ac operibus professioni illi consentaneis eandem demonstrat. (John Gerhard, *Loci*, III, 475.)

when she had received the messengers and had sent them out another way?" Jas. 2, 25. The story of Rahab is recorded Josh. 2 and 6. According to Josh. 2, 11 she first confessed with her mouth that the God of Israel is the God in heaven above and in earth beneath; then she proved that her faith was genuine by saving the messengers. Josh. 2, 15. 16. 21. This was the basis of her public justification. For when Joshua had taken Jericho, he "said unto the two men that had spied out the country, Go into the harlot's house and bring out thence the woman and all that she hath. . . . And the young men that were spies went in and brought out Rahab and her father and her mother and all that she had; and they brought out all her kindred and left them without the camp of Israel. And they burned the city with fire and all that was therein. And Joshua saved Rahab, the harlot, and her father's house and all that she had . . . because she hid the messengers which Joshua sent to spy out Jericho." Josh. 6, 22. 23. 25. How is it possible, in the face of this story, to deny that James is speaking of public justification? Where in the text is it said that because of her good work Rahab received a more abundant measure of forgiveness? Only this is said, that because of her good work she was brought out of the city and spared *before the eyes of all Israel*. And therefore her case is a conclusive confirmation of James's thesis: It is not faith alone which justifies publicly, but faith *and* works. If Rahab had possessed nothing else than the confession: "Your God is the Lord of heaven and earth," Josh. 2, 11, Israel would never have declared her righteous. Her life was saved because she not only confessed (*said that* she had faith, Jas. 2, 14), but also saved the spies. James concludes his *discursus* on this subject with the words: "For as the body without the spirit⁴⁰) is dead, so faith without works is dead also." Jas. 2, 26. If the body of a man is found in the forest, it is ex-

40) If one translated *πνεῦμα* in the text with *spirit*, then the following nonsense would be the result: Faith is the body, and works are the spirit operating through it; *i. e.*, works which by faith prove themselves to be active. Since, however, St. James cannot have said such nonsense, we go back to the original meaning of *πνεῦμα*, namely, *respiratio*. Compare, in the Septuagint version, Job 7, 15; Ezek. 27, 8; Hab. 2, 19; 1 Kings 17, 17; and the New Testament texts Luke 8, 54; Rev. 11, 11; 13, 15. — Quemadmodum corpus sine respiratione, quae est immediatus animae *ἔνσωμάτου* effectus ac certum vitae testimonium, est et judicatur mortuum, eodem modo fides, *h. e.*, externa fidei professio, sine operibus est mortua et inane quoddam simulacrum, vita et motu destitutum. (John Gerhard, *Loc. III, 475.*)

amined to see whether he breathes. If he breathes, he is alive; if he does not breathe, people say that a dead man was found. Just so with regard to faith. If the testimony of works is wanting, everybody judges that it is dead.⁴¹⁾

This is the simple sense of Jas. 2, 14—16. So also the Fathers have always understood it. All other interpretations either clearly violate God's Word, or they are refuted by the clear words of the texts. For example, some say that James contradicts Paul!⁴²⁾ If that were true, God's curse would rest upon him, for Gal. 1, 8, 9 we read: "But though we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." The fact is, however, that James did not preach another gospel than Paul. For he taught regeneration by the Word (1, 18) and that we apprehend salvation, *i. e.*, justification, by receiving, *i. e.*, believing, the Word (1, 21)⁴³⁾ It would indeed be well to remember what St. Augustine said in reply to those who declared that the Old and the New Testament contradicted each other. He says, if that were admitted, some might be so insane as to assert that also the New Testament contradicted itself. For just as the former critics place Moses in opposition to John, so the latter might easily make the simple believe that John and Paul are in conflict with each other. However, just as the pure and genuine Christian faith confesses that Paul and John are in harmony, so it also confesses that John and Moses agree with each other.⁴⁴⁾

41) Here it can be clearly seen that St. James indeed used the word *πίστις* *aequivoce*. The word *body* properly designates a living thing; when used in an improper sense, however, a corpse. The faith of the mouth is a *πίστις*, and yet it is not. If one wishes to refute the erroneous conception frequently attached to the word *πίστις*, he must necessarily make use of the conception in his argument. However, the apostle has brought order into the confusion, for he has shown that this [mouth] *πίστις* is no true [saving] *πίστις*; neither is the former, the [devil's] *πίστις*, a true [saving] *πίστις*. True faith is only to be found where there are good works.

42) De Wette, *Kommentar zu Jakobus*, 239.

43) Here James teaches, first, that the Word of God saves; secondly, that this saving Word must be accepted, *i. e.*, believed; thirdly, that it is not sufficient to have received it once [in Holy Baptism] as a noble graft. One must believe it continually.

44) Nam si esset alius, cujus item dementissimus furor ipsum Novum Testamentum sibi contrarium apud imperitos conaretur ostendere, quid aliud ageret, nisi quemadmodum isti Moysen et Johannem, ita illi Paulum et Johannem tanquam inimicos rixantesque proponeret? Sicut autem sincerissima et verissima fides commendat Pauli Johannisque concordiam, sic Moysi et Johannis pacem intuens ... amplectitur. (Augustinus, *Sermones*, Classis I, Sermon, I, § 5.)

Others say: "There is indeed harmony between James and Paul, but in this way: Both teach that faith justifies *by* works."⁴⁵⁾ The fact is that neither of the two teaches this. For Paul teaches that faith justifies *without* works, Rom. 4, 6; 11, 6; Eph. 2, 9; compare especially Rom. 4, 2 and Jas. 2, 21; and James teaches that faith *and* works justify, Jas. 2, 21. 22. 24. Therefore he who does not admit that Paul is speaking of secret justification and James of public justification had better not attempt to mate fire and water.

Just as little does the attempted solution of Bellarmine agree with the text. His Eminence opines that Paul is speaking of the first justification and James of the second.⁴⁶⁾ That is doubly false; for even according to Bellarmine's way of thinking Paul is not at all speaking of the first justification of Abraham, in his conversion. And on the other hand, the justification of Rahab, Jas. 2, was, according to Bellarmine's way of speaking, not the second, but the first.⁴⁷⁾ So everything whirls in a circle if one turns his back on the simplicity of God's Word.

Still more curious is a solution which the founder of Socinian-

45) This is the solution of the Jesuit Perrone, the fiercest enemy of the Evangelical faith. He writes: Ideoque novum accepti justificationis Abrahæ incrementum, quia ex fide in fidem progressus est. Hinc Jacobus quoque hoc retulit Genesios testimonium ad ostendum, fidem sine operibus non justificare, *et quoniam fides per opera justificat*, ideo per opera ex fide perfecta in dies augetur et crescit hæc ipsa justificatio, robustior ac fecundior fit. (Perrone, *Praelectiones Theologicae*, V, 267.)

46) Nos dicimus, Paulum loqui de prima justificatione, qua homo ex impio fit justus, Jacobum de secunda, qua justus efficitur justior. Et ideo recte Paulum dicere, justificari hominem sine operibus, Jacobum, ex operibus. (Bellarminus, IV, 936.)

47) Even Bellarmine felt this. For he admits (IV, 938) concerning Rahab: Est exemplum primæ justificationis. Nam probabile est, Raab usque ad illud tempus, quo suscepit nuntios, fuisse non solum meretricem, sed etiam infidelem; and concerning Abraham, that in Rom. 4 his second justification is meant. And yet the Jesuit remains on the bridge whose beams he has sawed off, for he proceeds: Igitur apostolus Rom. IV loquitur de prima justificatione, *tametsi* ad probandum exemplum petat a secunda justificatione. And: Sic Jacobus, quum loqueretur de secunda justificatione, attulit exemplum Raab, quod est primæ justificationis. *O this tametsi!* And how stealthily does it change itself into a *quum!* When a thief comes into a house, he first treads softly, but gradually he finds his bearings. So, then, Paul, Rom. 4, is speaking of the first justification *although* his example is taken from the second. That is said rather shyly. But now, full force ahead! *While* James takes an example from the second justification he, in his heart, really means the first. Excellent! But would it not have been more logical to conclude: Since Paul takes his example from the second justification, therefore he is also speaking of the second justification; and again, since James takes his example from the first justification, therefore he is speaking of the first? Of course, in that case it would follow that the first justification takes place by faith *and* works, and, *vice versa*, the second by faith alone—a doctrine which fits neither into the Tridentinum nor into any other system. In fact, the lock will not open whether you turn the key to the right or to the left.

ism has discovered. Faustus Socinus suggests that, when James says "works," he means faith⁴⁸⁾ Verily, an astounding discovery! We wonder what James can mean when he says: "Man is justified by works, and not by faith only." Jas. 2, 24. According to Socinus perhaps this: A man is justified by faith, not by faith only. We would indeed have to be prepared for a considerable change in the entire Christian doctrine if ever the highly ingenious principle should gain ground always to take one of two opposites for the other one.⁴⁹⁾

However, if we take Jas. 2 unmutilated by Socinian and Jesuitical sophistry, it is a clear, wholesome, yes, indispensable chapter. For nowhere else do you find the remedy against carnal misconception of St. Paul's doctrine so concisely in one vessel. One is really tempted to borrow a drop from it and for the purpose of explanation and defense place it, with the author of the Alexandrine manuscript, after Rom. 8, 1. St. Paul rejoices: "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." The author of the Alexandrine manuscripts adds: "who walk not after the flesh"; and still another one: "but after the Spirit."⁵⁰⁾

This is the doctrine of good works. He who wishes rightly to divide it must understand both the worthlessness and the worth of good works. They do not reconcile to God, neither in the beginning nor in the middle nor in the end of the life of a Christian; for the justification of a sinner before God always takes place purely by grace, purely for Christ's sake, purely gratis, and by faith alone.⁵¹⁾ And how could it be otherwise since all our good works are as filthy rags, Is. 64, 6, and evil lust is always in us? And if one command of God's Law is broken, then we have broken the whole Law. And finally, what are good works? Does not God command us to love

48) Haec opera efficaciam habebunt justificandi coram Deo non quidem ut opera, sed ut fiducia. Nihil autem absurdi est in eo. Siquidem jam dictum est, et opera ista aliud nihil reipsa esse quam fidem. (Faustus Socinus, *De Justificatione*, 123.) [I have condensed the bombast of Socinus somewhat.]

49) Dura admodum est κατάχρησις pro operibus fidem supponere et unum pro altero intelligere in illis, quae sibi invicem ἀντιδιηρημένως opposita. (Walther, *Harmonia*, 856 B.)

50) According to Cod. B, C, Δ, G, Sin., Paul, in Rom. 8, 1, had only written: Οὐδὲν ἄρα νῦν κατάκριμα τοῖς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ. To this the Cod. Alexandrinus added by way of explanation: μὴ κατὰ σάρκα περιπατοῦσιν; and later a corrector of Cod. Claromontanus with minusculae: ἀλλὰ κατὰ πνεῦμα. So also Luther, after Gerbelius.

51) "Therefore, whereas and as long as we are occupied with this article of justification, we reject and condemn works, since this article is so constituted that it can admit of no disputation or treatment whatever regarding works." (Luther, quoted in Formula of Concord; *Tri-glossa*, 925.)

Him with all our heart? Works which proceed from such a mind are good. But who is minded that way? Therefore we say with the Apology: Even our best works are unworthy before God. (*Triglotta*, 281), and with Luther: —

The best and holiest deeds must fail
Of all before Thee living;
Before Thee none can boasting stand,
But all must fear Thy strict demand
And live alone by mercy.⁵²⁾

And how could we think of boasting? Even if we really had done all those things which are commanded us, we would still remain unprofitable servants. Luke 17, 10; cp. Matt. 25, 30. Therefore good works are not necessary for salvation,⁵³⁾ neither to acquire nor to preserve it.⁵⁴⁾ For we “are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation,” as Scripture expressly testifies. 1 Pet. 1, 5. Of course, by sins against the conscience faith is lost. Therefore St. Peter exhorts us: “Give diligence to make your calling . . . sure.” 2 Pet. 1, 10. So we are to do good works lest we fall from our calling and lose the Spirit and the gifts which were given us by grace. In so far good works *are* necessary.⁵⁵⁾ Yes, they are necessary in general, for God has commanded them in the Old and in the New Testament. Even through James He admonishes us: “If ye fulfil the royal Law according to the Scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, ye do well.”⁵⁶⁾ Jas. 2, 8. These works we do not do by constraint, but willingly,⁵⁷⁾ being “created in Christ Jesus unto good works . . . that we should walk in them.”⁵⁸⁾ Eph. 2, 10. We should also be found in a state of good works that by them our faith may always be known.

“Now, the God of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make us perfect in every good work to do His will, working in us that which is well-pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.” Heb. 13, 20, 21.

52) “Aus tiefer Not schrei’ ich zu dir,” v. 2; compare Luther, St. Louis Edition, XI, 1731.

53) Formula of Concord; *Triglotta*, 799. 945.

54) Formula of Concord; *Triglotta*, 799. 949.

55) Formula of Concord; *Triglotta*, 947. 948. — Bona opera sunt facienda, ut sit firma vocatio, i. e., ne vocatione sua excidant, si iterum percent. (E. Hoepfner, *De Justificatione*, 916.)

56) Manifestum igitur est, propositionem illam, quod bona opera sint necessaria, veram esse. (*Repetitio Corporis Doctrinae Christianae*, 105. — Formula of Concord; *Triglotta*, 799. 943. 944.)

57) Formula of Concord; *Triglotta*, 799.

58) The peculiar use of ἐνί in ἐνί ἑργοῖς ἀγαθοῖς becomes clear from 1 Thess. 4, 7.

Justification and Sanctification.

Translated from Dr. E. Preuss's *Die Rechtfertigung*, Part X.

THE REV. JUL. A. FRIEDRICH, Iowa City, Iowa.

EDITORIAL NOTE.—This instalment concludes the work of our venerable brother, who, with great diligence and ability, has rendered into English one of the finest works on justification the Lutheran Church possesses. With our thanks to the translator is united the prayer that a new perusal of this classic may have deepened in all readers of the THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY the understanding and appreciation of the *articulus stantis et cadentis ecclesiae*.

God is holy, and we are to become holy also. However, since we are exceedingly unholy, it is the purpose of God's entire work in our behalf to make us free from sin, just as He Himself is free from it. The road of our pilgrimage from our baptism to our resurrection is indeed a long one; nor is it pleasant, for it leads through much tribulation and the waves of death. Nevertheless we are of good cheer, for we are walking under the shield of the forgiving grace of God. Not that we wish to abuse this shield for a cloak of maliciousness; we are rather renewed from day to day. The infant which is brought to baptism bears the image of the first Adam and is henceforth to be transfigured into the image of the second Adam. It is perpetually to put off the old man and perpetually to put on the new man.¹⁾ St. Paul says: "Put off the old man with his deeds; and . . . put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him." Col. 3, 9, 10; Eph. 4, 24. True, we shall not put off the old man completely till we die, neither shall we put on the new man completely until the resurrection of the body. 1 Cor. 15, 49. Meanwhile, however, we need to drown the former daily, and the latter must come forth daily; otherwise we easily fall from grace. When Scripture speaks of the *old man*, it means the whole sinful corruption which we have inherited from Adam, Col. 3, 8, 9, which is intimately, though, thank God, not inseparably grown together with

1) The Small Catechism. *Trigl.*, 551.

our *ego*. The *new man*, on the other hand, is the fulness of all virtues — knowledge of God, righteousness, mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering, love; in short, the image of God.²⁾ This putting off of the old man and putting on of the new man takes place in no other way than by perpetual exercise. 1 Tim. 4, 7. The putting off of the old man requires, first of all, that we do not permit sin to reign in our mortal body that we should obey it in the lusts thereof, Rom. 6, 6. 12; yes, in general that we commit [*vollbringen*, fulfil] sin no more.³⁾ That already requires struggle; therefore one must also avoid the occasion and flee from sin as from a serpent.⁴⁾

All this, however, is not yet sufficient; for we bear within our bosom a fountain from which sin incessantly flows. This fountain is our heart, and the water in it is evil lust. This well will swallow you up unless you continuously fill it up. Right here is the real seat of the evil, and therefore the main battle must be fought at this point.⁵⁾ First of all one must take nourishment and opportunity to move away from evil lust; one must starve and strangle it,

2) Col. 3, 10. 12. 13; Eph. 4, 24. — Since all these virtues are vividly exemplified to us in Christ, Paul in one place says: "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ," Rom. 13, 14, instead of: "Put on the new man," Col. 3, 10. This putting on of Christ is different from that which is mentioned Gal. 3, 27. In Gal. 3 the putting on of Christ denotes our being clothed with the imputed righteousness of Christ, which takes place in baptism, while the putting on of Christ which is mentioned Rom. 13, 14 is a gradual acquiring of the virtues of Christ. — *Christus induitur fide et studio pietatis. Est enim et meritum et exemplum. In baptismo induimus Christum per fidem sive per fiducialem meriti et justitiae Christi, pulcherrimae illius vestis, qua sponsa Christi ornatur, apprehensionem, deinde quoque per vitae sive virtutum Christi imitationem sive per sanctam conversationem; de qua induitione hoc loco agitur.* (John Gerhard, *Kommentar zum Roemer-brief*, 377.) — Rom. 13, 14 and Gal. 4, 19 belong together.

3) Gal. 5, 16 ff. [*τελέσητε*, fulfil]; cp. 1 John 3, 8. 9 [*ποιῶν*, commit]; 1 Pet. 2, 11 [*ἀπέχεσθαι*, abstain from]; 2 Cor. 7, 1 [*καθαρίσωμεν*, cleanse]; Rom. 6, 13 [*μηδὲ παριστάνετε*, yield not]; 1 Tim. 6, 10. 11 [*φεύγε*, flee]. — "Then good works are bound to follow, which are fruits of repentance" [German text: "Darnach soll auch Besserung folgen, und dass man von *Suenden lasse*"]. Augsburg Confession, *Trigl.*, 49.

4) Ecclesiasticus 21, 2: Ὡς ἀπὸ προσώπου ὄψεως φεῦγε ἀπὸ ἁμαρτίας, ἐὰν γὰρ προσέλθῃς, δέξεται σε. Ὀδόντες λέοντος οἱ ὀδόντες αὐτῆς, ἀναιροῦντες ψυχὰς ἀνθρώπων. — 2 Tim. 2, 22; 1 Tim. 6, 9. 11; 2 Cor. 6, 17.

5) Matt. 15, 19. 20. The water is evil lust. Rom. 7, 14—25; Jas. 1, 14. 15. This *ἐνπερίστατος ἁμαρτία*, Heb. 12, 1, must therefore be fought first of all.

as one strangles a polyp.⁶⁾ For it verily is a polyp and not a fly which can be crushed with one movement of the finger. One takes away nourishment and air from evil lust if one bewares not only of all filthiness of the flesh, but also of all filthiness of the spirit. 2 Cor. 7, 1. We therefore need always to pray: Lord, grant me Thy grace that I may check the evil will of my flesh and so fight against myself that I may not fulfil the demands of evil lust, not even in thought.⁷⁾ In that way we mortify the deeds. Rom. 8, 13. Yes, we, like the apostle, must keep our body under,⁸⁾ lest we preach to others and we ourselves should be castaways. In this task God assists us by causing our external man to perish (*διαφθείρεται*) day by day, whilst the inner man is at the same time renewed.⁹⁾ 2 Cor. 4, 16. So we are perpetually changed into the image of God, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.¹⁰⁾ For by continuously exercising ourselves unto godliness,¹¹⁾ we acquire righteousness and holiness, Eph. 4, 24, yes, every Christian virtue, Col. 3, 12, especially charity (love), which is the bond of perfectness.¹²⁾ We wrest also the members of our body from sin and yield them unto God as instruments of righteousness. Rom. 6, 13. The dying of the old man is, however, so intimately connected with the growth of the new man that the old man always loses ground exactly in the same proportion as the new man gains ground. For just as cold is removed by heat, so we in our renewing remove lying by truth, theft by labor and charity, corrupt communication by that which is good to the use of edifying, anger and clamor by kindness and readiness to forgive. Eph. 4, 22—32.

6) *Vetus Adam in nobis per detractionem alimenti peccaminosi corrumpitur; et sicut nutrimento subducto homo moritur, ita se habet cum extero homine subductione pabuli.* (J. A. Osiander, *Collegium Theol. Systematicum*, V, 223.)

7) Hymn: "Das Elend weisst du, Gott, allein," st. 17.

8) 1 Cor. 9, 27: *ὑπωπιάζω*, literally: I strike it in the face (under the eyes) with the fist.

9) *Ἀνακαινοῦται*, 2 Cor. 4, 16. — Renovatio and sanctificatio are two terms for the same thing, just as justificatio and remissio peccatorum. One term is always positive, the other one, negative.

10) 2 Cor. 3, 18: *ἀπὸ κυρίου πνεύματος*, "from the Lord the Spirit," or "from the Spirit who is the Lord."

11) 1 Tim. 4, 7: *γυμνάζειν πρὸς*; Acts 24, 16: *ἀσκήω*.

12) In the Septuagint version of Is. 58, 6 *σύνδεσμος ἀδικίας* is the bond which binds together with wickedness [unrighteousness]. In Acts 3, 28 it means the same. Hence *σύνδεσμος τῆς τελειότητος* is the bond which binds together with perfectness. It is evident from 1 Cor. 13, especially vv. 8 and 10, that Paul indeed considers charity as such a bond.

This sanctification is absolutely necessary. "For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness." 1 Thess. 4, 7. Justification is but the way which leads up to it.¹³⁾ He who uses it in any other way is like unto a child which washes itself and then rolls in the mire again. Furthermore, God commands sanctification in clear and unmistakable words. He exhorts us through St. Peter: "As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance; but, as He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation, because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy." 1 Pet. 1, 14—16. Cp. John 5, 14; Rev. 2, 1—7. And how dare we do otherwise? To whom you yield yourself servant to obey, his servant you are, whether of sin unto death or of obedience unto God for righteousness.¹⁴⁾ And if one were so foolish as to attempt to serve two masters, how ill would he fare! "Be not deceived, God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." Gal. 6, 7, 8. "Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God." 1 Cor. 6, 9, 10. Cp. Rev. 21, 8; 22, 15. Therefore "follow peace with all men and holiness, without which no man shall see God." Heb. 12, 14. Not as if perfect sanctification or sanctification in general were the ground of salvation, but because no one possesses faith who serves sin.¹⁵⁾ We say with Luther: "Therefore it is false and not to be permitted if one would preach thus: 'Although you do not keep the commandments nor love God and your neighbor, yes, though you be an adulterer, — that will not harm you. If you only believe, you will be saved.' No, my dear sir, you are mistaken; you will not possess the kingdom of heaven. For here it is written in concise and conclusive words: 'The works of the flesh are mani-

13) Rom. 8, 30: *οὓς δὲ ἰδικαίωσεν, τούτους καὶ ἰδόξασεν*. Cp. Titus 2, 14.

14) After Rom. 6, 16.

15) Verissimum est, quod sanctimonia destituti Deum visuri non sint, non sane quod ad salutis consecutionem requiratur ut illius causa, sed quia fides, in qua cardo justitiae et salutis nostrae vertitur absque sanctimoniae studio nunquam est, et proinde, ubi non est sanctitas, ibi neque fides; ubi fides non est, ibi nec Dei beata visio. (A. Hunnius, *De Justificatione*, 206. 207.) — 2 Tim. 2, 19 and 1 John 3, 6 will help to understand Heb. 12, 14.

fest . . . ; of which I tell you before, as I have told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.' ”¹⁶⁾ You must guard your conscience with great care, otherwise you will also make shipwreck concerning faith. 1 Tim. 1, 18. 19. If the enemy once has taken the moat, he soon will have the fortress.¹⁷⁾

But who is it that sanctifies, God or we? First, God; but we cooperate with Him; for the will of those who have been baptized has been made free.¹⁸⁾ How, otherwise, could Peter exhort us: “Purify your souls,”¹⁹⁾ and Paul: “Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness (*ἐπιτελοῦντες ἁγιασμένην*) in the fear of God”? 2 Cor. 7, 1. By what means is this done? By the Word and the Sacraments.²⁰⁾ For Holy Baptism is not only the washing of regeneration, but also of renewing. Tit. 3, 5. And as the Word of God begins our renewing in Holy Baptism, so it also continues it. “Sanctify them in Thy truth: Thy Word is truth.”²¹⁾ By this Word, being a sincere milk, we are to grow, 1 Pet. 2, 2, and to mortify the deeds of the body. Rom. 8, 13. Cp. John 6, 63. For “all Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God (*ὁ τοῦ θεοῦ ἄνθρωπος*) may be perfected.” 2 Tim. 3, 16. 17. And when we grow weary and sluggish in sanctification, which takes place according to the rule of the divine Law, then God arouses us by chast-

16) Luther, St. Louis Ed., XI, 1701. For explanation cp. Gal. 2, 17; 5, 19 ff.

17) Si quis dilectionem abjecerit, etiamsi habuit magnam fidem, tamen non retinet eam. Nec enim fidem aut justitiam retinent illi, qui secundum carnem ambulant. (Chemnitius, *Examen Conc. Trid.*, Ed. Frankoforti, 164 A.)

18) Rom. 6, 22; 8, 2. — “Therefore there is a great difference between baptized and unbaptized men. For since, according to the doctrine of St. Paul, Gal. 2, 27, *all who have been baptized have put on Christ* and thus are truly regenerated, they have now *arbitrium liberatum* [a liberated will], that is, as Christ says, *they have been made free again*, John 8, 36; whence they are able not only to hear the Word, but also to assent to it and accept it, although in great weakness.” (Formula of Concord. *Trigl.*, 907.)

19) 1 Pet. 1, 22. — Quicumque jam regenti ex semine verbi ipsi deinceps purificant animas suas obediendo veritati per Spiritum Sanctum, illi ipsi concurrunt ad sui renovationem. (John A. Osiander, *Collegium*, V, 204.)

20) [Sanctificationis] causa instrumentalis ex parte Dei sunt verbum et sacramenta. (Quenstedt, III, 633.) — 1 John 3, 9; Tit. 3, 5; Rom. 6, 4.

21) John 17, 17: *ἀλήθεια* without ἡ. Cp. 1 John 3, 9.

enings.²²⁾ Heb. 12, 10 the apostle teaches: "Our fathers for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but He for our profit, that we might be partakers of His holiness."²³⁾

The means by which *we* work on our sanctification is again faith. For Christ Himself says to Paul: "I send thee [to the Gentiles] to open their eyes and to turn them from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and inheritance among them *which are sanctified by faith that is in Me* (*ἐν τοῖς ἡγιασμένοις πίστει τῇ εἰς ἐμέ*)." Acts 26, 18. "Oh, it is a living, busy, active, powerful thing that we have in faith, so that it is impossible for it not to do good without ceasing. Nor does it ask whether good works are to be done; but before the question is asked, it has wrought them and is always engaged in doing them."²⁴⁾ In justification, faith receives, in sanctification it works. Two activities and one organ. It is the same lung which breathes the air and produces speech. But as we need always first to breathe in order to be able to speak, so we

22) Formula of Concord, *Trigl.*, 965. 969. — *Adminicula renovationis secundaria sunt afflictiones carnis*. 1 Pet. 4, 1. 2. (Hollaz, *Examen*, 406.)

23) "Secondly, we are also externally groaning under the cross and affliction, persecution and vexation of the world and the devil, which oppress us like a heavy stone in order that our old sinful nature may be subdued and curbed, so that it will not rebel against the spirit." (Luther, St. Louis Ed., XII, 763.)

24) From Luther's famous *Preface to the Epistle to the Romans*. St. Louis Ed., XIV, 99. 100. [Also quoted in the Formula of Concord, *Trigl.*, 941.] — We cannot forbear giving, in this connection, the entire passage from this classic, in the translation of the *Concordia Triglotta*. Dr. Walther used to tell his students that every Lutheran pastor ought to know it by heart. — *The Translator*. — "Thus faith is a divine work in us that changes us and regenerates us of God and puts to death the old Adam, makes us entirely different men in heart, spirit, mind, and all powers and brings with it [confers] the Holy Ghost. Oh, it is a living, busy, active, powerful thing that we have in faith, so that it is impossible for it not to do good, without ceasing! Nor does it ask whether good works are to be done; but before the question is asked, it has wrought them and is always engaged in doing them. But he who does not do such good works is void of faith and gropes and looks about after faith and good works and knows neither what faith nor what good works are, yet babbles and prates with many words concerning faith and good works. [Justifying] faith is a living, bold [firm] trust in God's grace, so certain that a man would die a thousand times for it [rather than suffer this trust to be wrested from him]. And this trust and knowledge of divine grace renders joyful, fearless, and cheerful towards God and all creatures, which [joy and cheerfulness] the Holy Ghost works through faith; and on account of this man becomes ready and cheerful, without coercion, to do good to every one, to serve every one, and to suffer everything for love and praise to God, who has conferred this grace on him, so that it is impossible to separate works from faith, yea, just as impossible as it is for heat and light to be separated from fire."

always need first to receive forgiveness in order to produce good works. Always; for as it is not sufficient to breathe once in our life, just so it is not sufficient to receive forgiveness only once. Perpetual forgiveness and perpetual sanctification is our portion. Our chief concern on earth is forgiveness and the second, sanctification. First blessed, then holy, 1 Pet. 1, 13—16; first washed, then temples of the Holy Ghost, 1 Cor. 6, 11. 19; first forgiveness, then love, Luke 7, 41—43. 47; Heb. 10, 19. 24; Col. 1, 4; first receive Christ, then walk in Him, Col. 2, 6. Cp. Ps. 130, 4; 1 John 2, 12—15.²⁵⁾ Thus perpetual sanctification flows from perpetual justification like the stream from the fountain. If the fountain dries up, the stream will be without water, so great is their interdependence.

And yet justification and sanctification must be carefully distinguished.²⁶⁾ For woe unto us if our faith made the new obedience its basis! Behold Paul. He had labored more abundantly than they all; yet not he, but the grace of God that was with him. 1 Cor. 15, 10. At the same time he had exercised himself to have always a conscience void of offense toward God and toward men. Acts 24, 16. Yes, he declares: "I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day." Acts 23, 1. And again: "I know nothing by myself; *yet*" — so Paul proceeds — "*am I not hereby justified.*"²⁷⁾ So he does not base his justification before God on his good conscience or on his holy conversation.²⁸⁾ For he knew that

25) Formula of Concord, *Conc. Trigl.*, 929.

26) Haec beneficia Filii Dei [justificatio et sanctificatio] dicimus quidem esse conjuncta, ita ut quando reconciliamur, simul etiam detur Spiritus renovationis. Sed propterea non confundimus illa, sed distinguimus; ut fides statuatur, se habere placatum Deum et remissionem peccatorum non propter sequentem ei inchoatam novitatem, sed propter mediatorem Filium Dei. (Chemnitius, *Examen*, I, 128 B. 192 A.)

27) 1 Cor. 4, 4: οὐδὲν γὰρ ἑμαυτῷ σύνοισα ["For of nothing I am conscious"; Luther: "*Ich bin mir wohl nichts bewusst*"].

28) Nihil mihi conscius sum, sed non in hoc justificatus sum. Verba sunt valde significantia. Quod enim inquit: Nihil mihi conscius sum, illud est, quod Act. XXIII dicit: Ego omni conscientia bona conversatus sum ante Deum usque in hodiernum diem. Et Act. XXIV: Studeo sine offendiculo conscientiam habere ad Deum et ad homines semper. In hoc est justitia bonae conscientiae, de qua inquit 1 Cor. XV: Plus illis omnibus laboravi, non ego autem, sed gratia Dei mecum. Gratia enim Dei sum id quod sum. Sed audi, quid Paulus renatus de illa sua justitia bonae conscientiae, quam gratiae seu dono et operationi Dei tribuit, pronuntiet: Nihil, inquit, mihi conscius sum, sed non in hoc justificatus sum. Justificationem igitur coram Deo ad vitam aeternam Paulus diserte detrahit suis operibus, in quibus post renovationem bona conscientia coram Deo et hominibus conversatus fuit. Hoc apostoli testimonium manifestissimum est. (Chemnitius, l. c., I, 155 B.)

in him (that is, in his flesh) dwelt no good thing. Rom. 7, 18. However, because God by grace perpetually regarded him righteous and because Christ perpetually made intercession for him, therefore he rejoices: "Who is he that condemneth?" Rom. 8, 33. 34. What things formerly were gain to him, those he counted loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus. He says: "For whom I have suffered the loss of all things and do count them but dung that I may win Christ and be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the Law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith."²⁹⁾ Here are two scales of a balance. In the one on the left lies all, all, all: good works and a conscience void of offense and labor in one's office and afflictions that were suffered. In the scale on the right side is Christ. The left scale rises — for, compared with Christ, everything is dung.

Therefore, the righteousness of faith and the righteousness of life must be kept separate very carefully.³⁰⁾ The righteousness of faith is the righteous of the Gospel; the righteousness of life is the righteousness of the Law. The former is a foreign righteousness, namely, Christ's; the latter is our own. The foreign righteousness we receive; our own righteousness we effect ourselves. The foreign righteousness protects us against wrath; our own righteousness needs forgiveness itself, Is. 64, 6, for it is always imperfect, while on the other hand the righteousness of faith is always perfect.

29) Phil. 3, 8. 9. — In vv. 4—6 Paul speaks of those things in which he gloried when he was yet a Pharisee. V. 7 he declares that he counted all this loss for Christ's sake. But now he proceeds. With *ἀλλὰ μὲν οὖν*, but yea rather, he broadens the *ταῦτα* in v. 7 into a *πάντα*, absolutely all. Here he does not say *τὰ πάντα*, lest one might think that he means only the *ταῦτα* of v. 7. In the second place, he broadens the *ἡγήμαι* of v. 7 into *ἡγοῦμαι*. It is therefore altogether groundless and arbitrary to assert that the apostle is merely saying the same thing Phil. 3, 8. 9 that he has said in v. 7. He merely uses his former pharisaism and its miserable glory as an occasion to make a very comprehensive and significant statement, namely, that he counted all things but dung in comparison with Christ.

30) "It is also correctly said that believers who in Christ through faith have been justified have in this life first the imputed righteousness of faith and then also the incipient righteousness of the new obedience or of good works. But these two must not be mingled with one another or be both injected into the article of justification by faith before God." (Formula of Concord, *Trigl.*, 927.) The theologians have the same thing in mind when they distinguish between the *justitia inhaerens* and the *justitia imputata*. — Luther, St. Louis Ed., V, 507. 508; VI, 25; XI, 1707. 1708. 1727—1729.

Let us, then, thank God daily for this greatest of all His benefits, that He hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son, in whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins. With it our Physician covers our festering wounds as with a plaster, and under it they heal from day to day, till our flesh is at last put to death and buried with all its filth. For one is delivered from the body of this death in no other way than by the death of this body. That is the gate which leads to glory, where we shall behold the face of God in righteousness, where there will be no more forgiveness, because there will be no more sin.

